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BOY'S AND GIRL'S LIBRARY.

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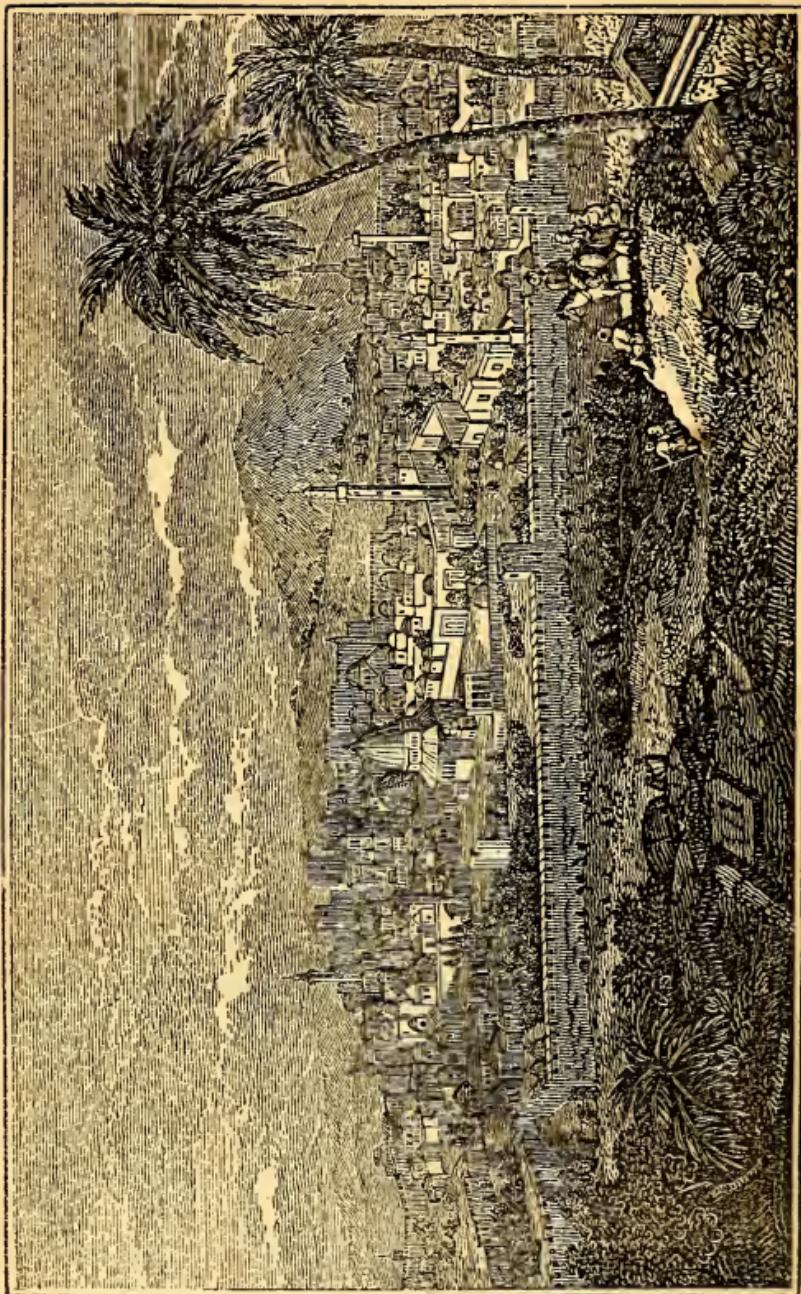
L I V E S
OF
THE APOSTLES
AND
EARLY MARTYRS
OF
THE CHURCH.

BY THE
AUTHOR OF "THE TRIAL OF SKILL."
VOL. I.

[It has been suggested to the publishers of the "Boy's and Girl's Library," that objections may be taken to the style of the *present* number, as being somewhat elevated, and perhaps too difficult of comprehension for the capacities of *very* juvenile readers. The publishers beg leave to observe to such as may look upon this suggestion as well-founded, that in some of the subsequent volumes particular attention will be paid to the attainment of all requisite simplicity; and that in the course of the publication several volumes will be included which, as regards both language and subject, will be found peculiarly adapted to, as they will be intended for, the understandings of children whose minds are as yet in the earlier stages of intelligence. The present number is more especially designed for the use of such as have made some progress in the cultivation of their mental powers. The various works which will form the series being entirely unconnected, parents in making purchases can select such as they shall consider suitable to the advancement and capacity of their children.]



View of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.



L I V E S
OF
THE APOSTLES
AND
EARLY MARTYRS
OF
THE CHURCH.

[DESIGNED FOR SUNDAY READING.]

BY THE
AUTHOR OF "THE TRIAL OF SKILL."

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**EXTRACTS FROM THE ADDRESS PREFIXED
TO THE "SUNDAY LIBRARY."**

It is, perhaps, owing to the scarcity of suitable publications, that we so often meet with young persons, who devote the leisure of the Sabbath to the perusal of works which have a necessary tendency to drive from the recollection every thought of seriousness and devotion. Unable to keep their attention fixed for any length of time on religious subjects, when presented to them in the usual form of sermons and discourses, and yet feeling how irksome it is to pass several unoccupied hours together without having recourse to reading, they fancy, no doubt, that tales and other books of entertainment are their proper, if not only, resource.

Nor is it sufficient, in order to prevent this

evil habit, that children be early told to take pleasure in the thought, that by abstaining from their ordinary reading on the Sunday, they honour God.

Excellent as is this lesson, and important as it is to impress the mind early with the conviction that it is necessary to resign our own ways for God's, and to sacrifice our own wills in obedience to His commands, it seems certain, that something more should be added. Young persons who evince a willingness to conform to the rules of self-control merit beyond all doubt every encouragement; and, instead of confining ourselves to assuring them that they will receive hereafter the promised reward of the righteous, they should, as far as it is possible, be allowed a foretaste of heaven even here: it should be permitted to them to experience, that, as with the practice of divine wisdom, so with its study, "all her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths peace."

And here the author would fain remind her young readers, that Sabbath-breaking stands

foremost in the list of sins which draw men on to destruction, and that the due observance of the day of rest is the virtue which leads to every other, and to which the highest and holiest blessings are annexed. She therefore earnestly presses upon their consideration, that the day should, from its commencement to its end, be honoured above all others, and that it should consequently be respectfully and gratefully distinguished from them, both by its pursuits and pleasures.

But let them not imagine, that she has any wish to inculcate the idea, that sad countenances or forbidding austerity ought to fill up the space not given to the duties of public worship, or to the employment of charity. They will quickly perceive that this is the farthest from her design. She is fully persuaded, that the cause of religion cannot be more effectually hindered, than by exhibiting it as the bane of all joy and gladness ; but she is desirous of preventing their joy degenerating into frivolity and sin, and of teaching them, while

they rejoice, to rejoice in what is worthy of the day. Delighting, in fact, in the recollection of many families of her acquaintance, with whom all that is holy, heavenly, and happy is on that privileged day brought into union, she presents to the public the present volume, in the hope that it may lead others to the imitation of their example.

She deeply laments, that the same sweet strain of piety does not flow from her pen, which she has often admired in the writings of others, and which she has observed to steal so gently and so beneficially into the hearts of the young reader. But God giveth to every one in measure as He will ; and should she be permitted to exhibit a faithful picture of early faith and practice, and should grace be given her to show how patiently the apostles suffered to the end in vindication of the holy name of Christ, how their example was followed by their immediate disciples, and how it ought to be followed by ourselves; she believes her time will not have been misspent.

GLOSSARY.

Apostolate—The office of an apostle.

Avalanche—A term applied to the sliding down of quick masses of snow from the mountains of Switzerland.

Blasphemous—Words spoken against God, or against his agents.

Compatriots—Persons born in the same country.

Caviller—A person fond of making objections.

Deacon—A minister, or servant. Used in the New Testament to denote one who ministers in the service of God.—See 1 Tim. chap. iii. 8th and 12th verses.

Gladiators—Men who fought and murdered each other with swords at the Roman Games, for the amusement of the populace.

Glossary—A kind of Dictionary, explaining difficult words or phrases.

Idiomatic—Taken from *idiom*, which signifies peculiarity of phrase. Expressions are called idiomatic, which convey an idea different from the common meaning of the words of which they are composed; as, “Courir à toutes jambes”—which is, literally, to run with all your legs: but it is used idiomatically, and means—run as fast as you possibly can.

Lictors—Petty officers, who attended on consuls, to obey their orders, and to punish criminals.

Opprobrious—Reproachful or disgraceful.

Proconsul—From *pro*, for; and *consul*, director; a Roman officer, acting for the director or governor of a province.

Pythoness—A priestess of Apollo.

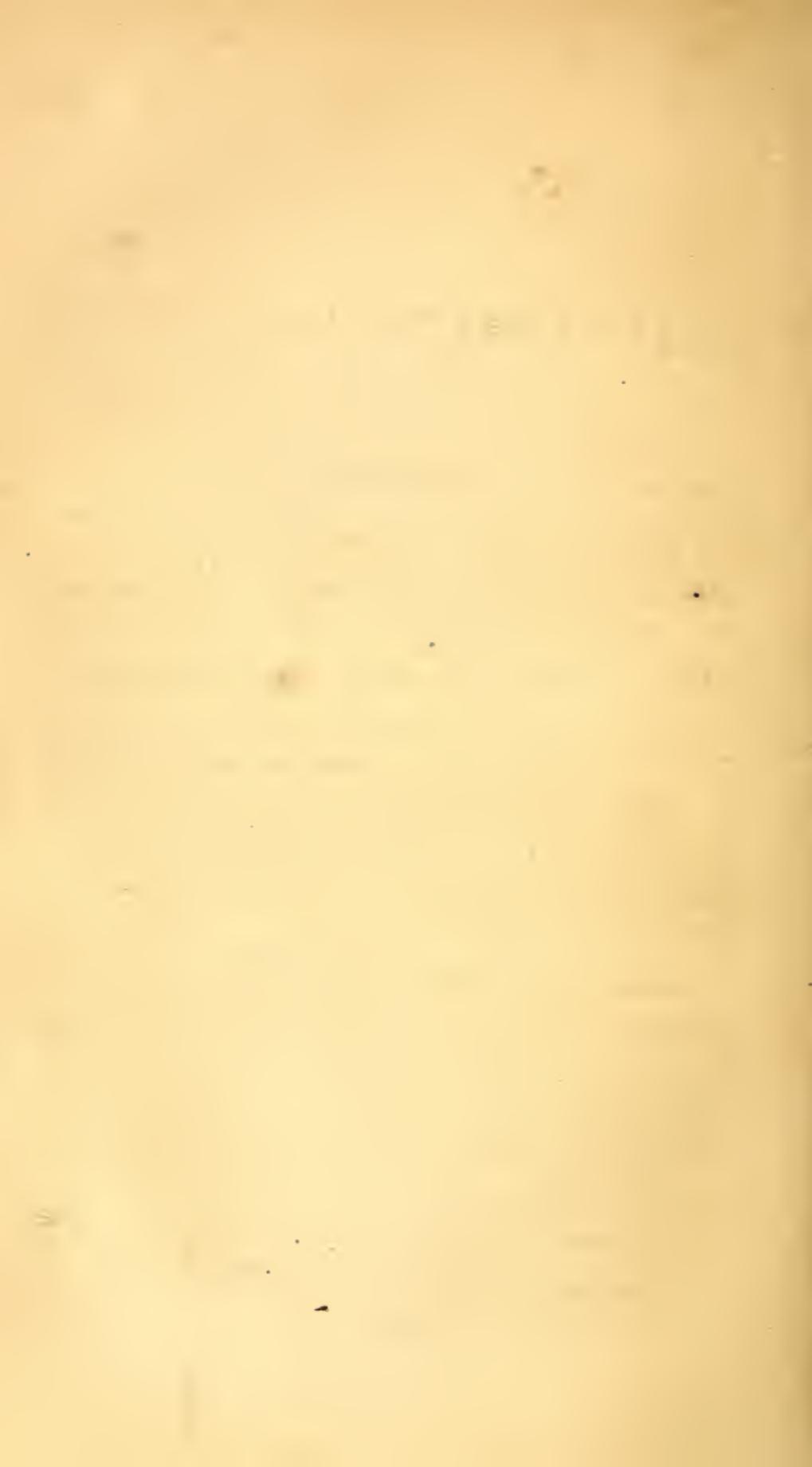
Respondent—One who replies.

Rabbies—*Rab*, signifies great; from which comes *Rabbin*, *Rabbi*; a title meaning master, doctor, or chief, one who excels.

Synagogue—An assembly; or the place where an assembly meets.

Sanhedrim—A council of the Jews, consisting of seventy senators.

Satellites—Inferior attendants.



JUVENILE LIBRARY.

DIALOGUE.

"How sorry I am that we have not another volume of these fine Bible Stories," exclaimed Henry Arden, as he closed one of the little books well known to the public by that name.

"Perhaps," replied his grandmother, to whom he had been reading the book aloud, "perhaps the 'affectionate aunt' who selected those stories may yet write some others of the same kind for the children of whom she seems so fond."

"Oh I hope she may," said he; "I wonder she did not tell us what became of St. John, and St. Peter, and St. Paul, and what happened to all the apostles after they had lost their Master. Do you not think, grandmamma, that true stories about them, and about these poor persecuted Christians, whose pictures I used to be so fond of looking at in Fox's Book of

Martyrs, would be very entertaining ? I wish she, or some one else, would write a history of their lives, fit for me to read, until you would let me have that great, full-grown history, which you say is too old and too frightful for me now."

It was then requested, not only by Henry, but by his sister and his two cousins who were present, that if no work of the kind should appear within a short time, Mrs. C. should herself undertake the task ; and, yielding to the urgent solicitation, she promised to satisfy their anxiety.

A few weeks elapsed, when Henry and his grandmother being alone, the following scene occurred.

"Oh pray do come on quickly, dear grand-mamma," said Henry, endeavouring to drag his aged relation after him, as they walked together down a rugged path which led from their mansion to a favourite arbour at some distance in the grounds. "Emily and my cousins will have gone back to the house, if we do not make haste. How surprised they will be to hear that you have so soon begun the nice new book you promised us. The very last thing we were talking of together,

was what volume we should choose out of our little library for this evening's reading; and I was just running in to get the 'Wars of the Jews' for myself, and 'The Catechist' for the girls; but we have read them both two or three times already, and it will be so delightful to hear one of your new stories instead."

Away flew the young enthusiast still faster than before towards the arbour, crying out as he entered, "Mary! Agnes! Emily! what news do you think I have got to tell you? Do you know that grandmamma has really begun to write *The Lives of the Apostles*? Here she comes with the first Life in her hand ready for us to hear, and we are all to find fault with it, she says, just as we please, and if we do not like it, she will not get it printed; but if we do, she will go on with the other Lives, and have them all published to put into our library, which we have been longing so much to get a new set of books for."

The three girls started up to meet their grandmother in delight at this information, declaring nothing could have suited better with their present wishes. And the moment Mrs. C. entered the arbour they hustled in every direction to provide her with accommo-

dation, entreating that she would immediately be seated and begin reading her new work.

"Here, dear grandmamma," said Emily, "is your nice little arm-chair."

"And the cushion for your feet," said Mary.

"And my drawing-stand for a reading-desk; all quite ready for you to begin," said Agnes.

"I must beg a little time to take breath, my children, after my walk from the house," said the old lady, "for Henry has drawn me on quite beyond my speed; and while I rest, you may tell me what you have been all about this lovely-looking *Sabbath* evening."

"You will say we have been sad idlers, I fear, grandmamma; for we have not been doing any thing except looking at the beautiful prospect before us, and chatting about it," said Mary, the oldest and most reflecting of the group. "This is, as you say, indeed, a lovely-looking Sabbath evening. It makes one feel peaceful and happy, almost without knowing why."

"Why do you say *Sabbath*, Mary, when Sunday would do just as well? You know grandmamma objects herself to it, and says it sounds canting and old-fashioned, coming out of the mouths of young people like us."

"But at present, Henry, Sunday would not do so well. It is, I grant you, always best, when speaking on sacred subjects, for both young and old to make use of expressions in common acceptation ; and to let their light shine before men by the piety of their works, not by the peculiarity of their words ; but on the present occasion, both Mary and I used the term *Sabbath*, which, you know, means *rest*, because every thing happens to look so peculiarly at rest this evening."

"Yes, indeed they do," said Henry ; "even the sun, though it shines so brightly, is not glancing and dancing about as usual."

"No," said Agnes, "it is lying with a warm, steady glow over the meadows, making them look so soft and tranquil, I do not wonder the cattle all around have laid themselves down to sleep."

"The sun is going to set," said Henry, "and I suppose that is the reason it looks so quiet ; but I really think that it, too, seems as if it were falling asleep."

Mary then pointed to a beautiful spot within their view, where a mountain torrent rushed, usually with violence, over a stupendous cliff, and pursued its rapid way past the door of

the arbour. "Even that noisy waterfall," said she, "seems to be infected with the stillness of the hour, and now steals quietly down the rock, and past our retreat, as if it, too, were going to rest."

"But that is only because the river is not so full as usual," said Henry, fancying himself a philosopher.

"Look at that beautiful mountain rising behind the waterfall, with its purple base and golden top," said Agnes. "Oh! if mamma were here, she would paint those lovely tints, as she would call them, immediately."

"That is, if she could," interrupted little malapert.

"Really, all things do seem as if they were resting to-night," said Mary. "There is not a breath of wind sighing, not a leaf stirring, nor even the singing of a bird to disturb the stillness."

"I wonder what it is that makes every thing so quiet," said Henry. "But I suppose it is just that we all might hear the charming new book, if you girls would only hold your chattering tongues, and let it be begun." Then drawing his chair close beside his grandmother, he put the manuscript into her hand, and she at length commenced reading.

CHAPTER 1.

THE DEATH OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.

The day of hope and prayer is past ;
The day of comfort dawns at last :
Swiftly and straight, each tongue of flame,
Through cloud and breeze, unwavering came ;
And darted to its place of rest,
On some meek brow, by Jesus bless'd.

CHRISTIAN YEAR

“ THE land of Palestine, during the months of our winter and spring, enjoys a climate so delicious, that the fields are ready for harvest before the seeds sown in this less-favoured country have cast up the first green covering with which they adorn the earth. I shall begin my history of the apostles with the commencement of the first sweet summer season which gladdened the hearts of the inhabitants of that land after the Saviour of mankind had ascended to his Father, and left his fol-

lowers at Jerusalem in expectation of the promised Comforter, who was to console them for his loss. Though unacquainted with the nature of this Comforter, or the manner of his coming, the disciples still waited in patient hope and confident reliance on his word for the fulfilment of the promise ; and they were not disappointed.

"The month of April arrived ; that joyful day dawned known to the Jews as the day of Pentecost, when the first ripe fruits of the earth were to be gathered in. It rose bright and lovely, and was hailed with its wonted joy throughout the holy city. The inhabitants flocked from all quarters of the town to celebrate their favourite festival. The apostles also observed the feast with fervent gratitude to the Giver of all good, and having their hearts filled with the memory of their divine Master, and of all that he had done and suffered for them, they went with one accord into one place to pray. Here, suddenly, there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting ; and there appeared to them tongues like as of fire—an image well fitted to express the gift of using different languages,

and of speaking with that force and energy which should, with the all-prevailing strength and rapidity of fire, penetrate in every direction, and conquer every obstacle.

"A tongue rested on each of the disciples, and they were filled with the holy Spirit of God, and began immediately to speak in languages which they never understood before ; and they were impelled to utter things new and strange to themselves, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Then they perceived that this was the promise of the Father, the Holy Ghost or Comforter, which was to come ; and they went out boldly, and taught in the temple, and in all places, showing forth everywhere the wonderful works of God. And the fame of this power which God had given to them was noised abroad throughout the city ; so that persons of all countries who were dwelling there flocked to see if the reports which had reached them were true, and were astounded when they heard them speaking in their own several tongues the wonderful works of God. Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of every different land and nation, heard them deliver the clearest and wisest instructions in the languages wherein they had

themselves been born, and in wonder and amazement they turned to each other, asking what these strange things could mean.

"The disciples, however, although they too felt awe-struck at the miracle wrought within them, did not wonder. They understood how this power had been given them on that particular day, as the first-fruits of the Spirit which was to remain with them and with their children for ever, to guide them during their progress through life. They felt that it was now their bounden duty to go out boldly to reprove the world of sin, and to instruct the ignorant in the means of salvation opened to them through the redemption of Christ. Immediately, therefore, they began to teach that whosoever would repent and forsake his sins, calling on the name of the Lord Jesus, should be saved.

"These were glad tidings to all the reflecting part of their hearers; for all who reflected knew that they had sinned; but they knew not how they should obtain forgiveness. And the words being uttered with the force and tenderness, energy and kindness, which God had put into the hearts of the apostles towards the human race, the multitude were so affected

by all the truths spoken to them, that great numbers came forward in that same day, declaring their belief in all they had heard, and entreating to be received into fellowship with Christ's flock.

"I need scarcely tell you that they were joyfully admitted into that blessed company; but I cannot help wondering at their constancy, when I remember, that in despite of all the scoffing and derision of their brethren, and the various temptations of the world around them, these new converts continued steadfast in their opinions to the end."

"From this time, great fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles; and the disciples lived together as one family, having all things in common: they sold their possessions and goods, and, parting them among their brethren, as every man had need, they brake bread daily from house to house, with great singleness of heart, in the most perfect state of friendly intercourse, praising God with resigned and grateful hearts, and having favour with all the people; and there were added to the church daily such as should be saved."

"*Added to the church, grandmamma!*" said

Henry ; " we never heard of their having one before. I should like to know what sort of place it was, and which of the apostles built it. I wonder if it was like any of those papa has built. But I suppose it was much grander."

" If you speak of a mere edifice, Henry, it is of little importance what description of temple they had, or what sort of building any of us have for worship, so that it be a fit and proper place in which the members of God's church can assemble and offer their prayers and praises to their great and good Creator."

" *God's church!* did you say? Is not every church called God's church, or the house of God? I do not understand you, grandmamma; will you explain what you mean?"

" The word church, my dear boy, originally meant an assemblage of people, who met together for one particular object, whether of religious worship or otherwise."

" An assemblage of people!" again exclaimed Henry ; " I thought it meant a house or temple where people went to say their prayers."

" And you thought rightly, my child ; for

custom has also given it that meaning. Persons so seldom meet together united in one common feeling on any subject but religion, that the word *church* in time ceased to be applied to any except religious assemblies. It soon, therefore, became a name for the place where such assemblies were held ; and in this sense it is now most commonly used."

"But the church of God, grandmamma, which you mentioned just now, that must mean some particular church. Where is it ? I hope it is in this country."

"There are, my boy, in this and in every other country of Christendom, a number of faithful worshippers who belong to the church of God. That expression means the whole assembly of Christians, of whatever sect or denomination, who, in all the different countries in the world, believe in Christ as God : as God reconciling the world to himself by the sacrifice made for sin ; and who try with sincerity and truth to love and fear and serve him as they ought to do."

"And the holy catholic church, grandmamma, which we pray for every Sunday in that prayer which you are so fond of," said

Henry; "what is that? Does it mean the Church of Rome?"

"No, my dear; the word catholic means universal: and it is but another method of expressing the church of God. It comprises the entire number of devout worshippers in Rome, France, England, Ireland, Scotland, America, and all the quarters of the earth, who lift up their hearts in adoration to the one common Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier of all. I am indeed, Henry, fond of the prayer you mention: there cannot be a more delightful feeling than that which the heart enjoys when, kneeling in the house of God, we join in that brotherly supplication for all mankind. Then, indeed, we feel ourselves a part of that mystical body, the holy catholic church, whose members are in every part of the globe, and who together lift up their hearts to Him who sees them all in secret, but will himself reward them openly."

"I will always join in that prayer, grand-mamma," said Henry, "and try to make one of God's great assembly every Sunday. But what a small assembly it must have been when the apostles first began to preach at Jerusalem."

“ It was, my love, small indeed, compared with what it now is : composed, too, of humble mechanics and poor fishermen, who possessed no earthly authority or power to influence mankind, excepting those of speech and reason. Yet from that apparently insignificant band, we now behold every quarter of the world enlightened, the most remote regions peopled with their followers, and benefited by their teaching.”

“ That reminds me of a verse in one of my hymns, grandmamma :

‘ How comes it that this little band,
Once so despis’d and poor,
Should now be found in ev’ry land,
Peopling the world all o’er ? ’ ”

“ I like to hear you apply your hymns in this manner, my dear boy ; it shows that you both understand and feel their meaning. The great and rapid increase of Christianity comes indeed from God alone, and he wills that nothing shall ever stop its progress until it shall at last cover the whole earth as the waters cover the sea.”

“ Does your book tell if the Christians in-

creased rapidly from the very first?" said Mary.

"Yes," replied Mrs. C., resuming her narrative, "owing to the immediate augmentation of their numbers, which took place after the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, it became necessary to appoint persons to perform the various offices required among them. So the twelve apostles whom Christ had purposely selected as heads for directing all the rest called together the disciples, and desired them to choose out seven of the best and wisest men among them, that they might keep charge of the public money, take care that the widows and friendless should not be neglected in the daily divisions of food, and provide for the wants of all. This the disciples immediately did, selecting persons noted for integrity of character; and among them was a young man named Stephen, whose love to God and to his fellow-creatures made him dear to all the people; who, after that the apostles had blessed him, and received him into office as a deacon of the church, immediately set himself to fulfil his trust with all the ardour and intrepidity of a pious

and faithful minister. Being filled with power by the Holy Ghost, he did many miracles among the people, and made so many converts, that the wicked and unbelieving Jews began already to think that he and the small company of Christians to which he belonged would draw the whole world after them. They therefore disputed with him wherever they could find an opportunity, but were never able to prevail against him, because, according to God's promise, the Holy Spirit had given him a mouth and wisdom, which all his adversaries were unable to resist. The word of God, therefore, went on increasing, and the disciples multiplied exceedingly; and at last, a great many even of the priests became obedient to the faith. Then the Jews felt still more alarmed, and there arose in the principal synagogue of Jerusalem men who had been trained up in their academies under their most learned rabbins."

"Oh stop, stop!" cried Henry; "there are two hard words close together, *synagogue* and *rabbins*, and a little while ago you said the word *deacon*—and I do not understand

any one of them ; do pray tell me what they all mean, before you go on."

"I forgot to mention," said his grandmamma, "that I have adopted one of Miss Edgeworth's judicious plans, for giving information to youth ; and instead of confining my language to an over-simple style of expression, I have made a glossary for my book, which will explain the meaning of any word with which a child so young as you, Henry, may be unacquainted."

"Then, grandmamma, you must put *glossary* the very first, for I do not understand that."

"Very well," said Mrs. C., "it is easily done : here is the paper which you can keep before you, and refer to when any word occurs which you do not understand." She then, after waiting for a few seconds, gave the glossary to Henry, desiring him to read what she had written.

He did so ; and having discovered the meaning of the words which had puzzled him so much, he begged she would go on, and let them hear what the men were going to do who arose in the synagogue.

"They were going," she replied, "to dispute with Stephen, and to try once more if they could not overcome him in argument. Having been all brought up and carefully instructed in the most subtle arts of sophistry and disputation, they fancied themselves the greatest orators and best reasoners in the whole world. So they argued with Stephen, getting up one after the other, hoping they should at last silence him. But clever as they were, they could not resist the truth and wisdom with which he spoke."

"I am glad they were disappointed," said Henry; "I suppose they were very much ashamed, and very angry."

"Yes, Henry, they became both alarmed and angry; so they suborned men to swear that they had heard Stephen speaking blasphemous words against God!"

"What!" said Agnes, "against that very God whom he was trying to make them love! Could they pretend that he was speaking blasphemous words against him?"

"Even so, Agnes; they boldly asserted the falsehood, and stirred up the people to believe their assertion; and that fickle and giddy multitude who had been before struck with

wonder at his miracles joined with the scribes and elders, who, afraid that their own reputation for wisdom and learning would suffer, rushed suddenly upon him, and carried him before the sanhedrim, to be tried for his pretended crimes."

"Sanhedrim!" interrupted Henry; "ah, that is another hard word, which I must look for in the glossary."

"You will find it there, with some others which you have not yet noticed," said Mrs. C.; and having made him examine the paper, she continued.

"Now this sanhedrim, or council-hall, was a fearful place; all who entered it had cause to tremble; for there, through falsehood, hatred, and revenge, the innocent were often condemned to suffer death, while the guilty were received to pardon. There were several dreadful methods by which, in those days, both the Jews and Romans were accustomed to put to death criminals whom they condemned. For high-treason, sedition, &c. &c. the punishment was crucifixion; for theft and several other crimes, it was hanging; for blasphemy and others, stoning. Stephen, therefore, while standing before the assembly,

was aware of the law by which he was about to lose his life, and felt that there was no chance for escape: for he knew that the same hearts and hands were now turned against him which had nailed his blessed Master to the cross, on the pretended charge of his having wished to make himself a king. On hearing himself accused of blasphemy, he therefore knew that they meant to stone him to death: yet the certainty of a fate so horrible in no way damped his courage. He waited for a favourable opportunity to address the multitude, not with any hope of preserving his life, or of prolonging that existence which he esteemed of little value, but with the firm resolution to use every moment that should be left him in proving the truth of the doctrines he taught, and in trying to open the eyes of his accusers to their own sin and danger. Then the false witnesses spake out, and said, 'This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and against the law. We have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered to us.'

"Then all who sat in the council looked

steadfastly on Stephen, to observe the effect which this accusation might have on him ; but instead of seeing guilt or dismay pictured in his countenance, they saw with astonishment his face, as it had been the face of an angel, beaming with more than wonted brightness and serenity.

“ The high-priest then, anxious to hear from his own lips either a denial or an acknowledgment of the charge laid against him, said to him, ‘ Are these things so ? ’

“ Stephen, animated with the desire of converting his deluded adversaries, and of making them acknowledge him whom they had crucified as their only Saviour, Lord, and Master, immediately opened his mouth, and besought them all, as men who were dear to him as brethren or fathers, to hearken to him.

“ He then explained to them several parts in the Jewish history which he knew they did not thoroughly understand ; proving to them that they, as the peculiar servants of the Most High, had received a law from God which they had never kept, and that although they pretended to be learned persons, strict, wise, and righteous, and teachers of other men, yet they were even at that very moment keeping

themselves in ignorance, blinding their eyes to the truth, and wilfully resisting the Holy Spirit of God. As their fathers had killed the prophets who foretold the coming of Jesus Christ, so they, Stephen told them, even more wicked than their fathers, had murdered that just and holy One when actually present with them, for which crime they must undoubtedly suffer, unless they should repent.

"Stephen, it appears, would have gone on to prove that Christ was risen again, and that he was still ready to pardon their sins and receive them to salvation, if they would only ask forgiveness ; but they did not give him time to proceed. Cut to the heart by the truths he had uttered, they gnashed upon him with their teeth, and eagerly called out for the moment of his execution. Though now hopeless of their conversion, Stephen was still undaunted, his mind being filled, through the influence of the Holy Ghost, with the most perfect meekness and resignation. He looked steadfastly up to heaven, and there saw the glory of God, and Jesus his beloved Master, standing at the right-hand of the Majesty on high ; and finding himself further animated by that glorious sight, which

was, no doubt, revealed to him for the wisest purposes, and becoming still more anxious that the whole world should know how true and real was that heaven which Christ had opened to all, he proclaimed aloud what it was at which they saw him gaze with such delight. ‘Behold!’ cried he, ‘behold! I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right-hand of God!’

“Pretending to be shocked by these words, the Jews stopped their ears, and crying out with a loud voice, ran suddenly upon him with one accord, and dragged him away from the council. And then, because it was contrary to their law to put any man to death within the walls of the city, they carried him out of Jerusalem, hurrying him furiously along, that they might immediately stone him.

“Now death by stoning I can easily imagine to be among the most dreadful that can be conceived. It was originally decreed to the lowest and most hateful offences, and was mercifully intended to deter men from the practice of such crimes. But where is the law, however good or wise, that will not in time be misused by human power and wickedness; and where is the human heart in

which the seeds of every vice may not early be discovered? I have often seen boys, Henry, in the thoughtlessness of their young hearts, throw stones at a poor little bird, until they have deprived it of life. I have seen them, even while it lay convulsed before them, leap with delight at their own adroitness, and, forgetful of the pain they were inflicting, rejoice as each stone hit the harmless creature. You will be surprised, perhaps, if I tell you that the spirit which made these thoughtless boys enjoy killing the innocent bird, was the same which probably lived in the hearts of many of the wicked Jews who now surrounded Stephen. Some, no doubt, were actuated only by a misguided zeal for religion. Instructed on false principles, and grown up in the persuasion of mistaken notions, they thought they were doing God service. But, as in every multitude of this kind, others we may suppose there were who joined in the execution from the love of cruelty, who had not been taught, when children, to know that it was a wretched and a wicked spirit which can delight in others' sufferings; and so they had let it grow with their growth, and strengthen with their strength, until they

were now able to stand around their fellow creature, even the mild, benevolent, kind hearted Stephen, eager to display their strength in aiming against his body the stones which each, with ferocious grasp, held ready for his destruction.

"This method of execution was in general managed with as much regularity as any other manner of putting criminals to death. The witnesses against the prisoner were always appointed by law to throw the first stone, and their doing so was the signal for the whole multitude to begin the assault. Scarcely, however, in the present instance, could the people be restrained from the attack, or persuaded to wait for the usual forms.

"Stephen was dragged to a spot in front of his cruel enemies: the perjured witnesses, that they might be free to take the better aim, hastily took off their clothes, and threw them at the feet of a young man named Saul, whose office was to keep them in charge; and having given the appointed signal, the multitude, with furious eagerness, and shouts of savage joy, instantly sent forth a shower of stones against their defenceless victim. Stunned and lacerated, bruised and exhaust-

ed, but not yet deprived of life, he kneeled down and called upon his still beloved Redeemer, crying, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!’ But his relentless foes pursued their savage work, and with cruel hearts and hands continued to hurl their missiles against him. Nothing could, however, subdue his patience; though his agony was great, and he again cried out with a loud voice, yet what was his cry? Was it a prayer in his own behalf, or was it a supplication against his enemies? No: ‘Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,’ were the words he uttered; and when he had said this he fell asleep. Nature could not endure more, and he sank into a state of insensibility, from which no torments could awake him. Still his foes, resolute to complete their purpose, continued their attack; but the stones which they now flung against his person occasioned no more pain; the wickedness and cruelty of his enemies no longer inflicted sorrow. His spirit was with the God who gave it birth, received already into realms of everlasting bliss.”

“Yes, grandmamma, I’m sure Stephen’s spirit must have gone into happiness, for he spoke almost the same words that the Saviour

did when the wicked Jews put him to death : ' Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' This showed that he was like Christ ; and papa says that all that are like Christ, Christ will have to be with him."

" True, my child ; and from two such bright examples of forgiveness, learn that when you come to die you must not harbour the least degree of malice towards one of your fellow-creatures, whatever wrongs or injuries you may have received at their hands.

" At length the ferocious multitude, perceiving he was dead, grew weary of their employment, and quitted the lifeless clay, leaving it to be gazed at by the populace, and afterward to be devoured by dogs. But some of the disciples, more attached and devoted to Stephen than the rest, resolved to brave every danger, and to rescue the remains of their beloved brother from such disgrace. They therefore, when the multitude had dispersed, carried his body to its burial, making great lamentation over him. Time at length enabled them to bear this new affliction as they ought, and taught them to rejoice that he was removed from a world of misery and trial, in which they were themselves still suffering, &c

one of rest and endless happiness. They then endeavoured to sooth each other's sorrow, and comforted themselves with the hope that ere long they all should see him again where death could never enter."

"I wonder they could ever bear to think of him again," said Agnes; "I am sure, if I had been in their place, and had seen him so barbarously killed, I never could."

" You can scarcely compare your own feelings with those of the apostles, my dear girl," said Mrs. C.; "for they were endued with peculiar strength for their peculiar sufferings: They were therefore enabled to view the subject of death and separation from their friends with the resignation and firmness which those trials should ever inspire, but which we find it very difficult to put in practice; yet God endows us with strength sufficient to our day, when we rely on his assistance. He has, indeed, in mercy to the human race, ordained that even the greatest sufferers, those who mourn the loss of all they ever loved, should find their misery gradually assuaged by the imperceptible effects produced by time; and that we should be made to feel that the disquietude of sorrow must pass away

from the heart, as surely as the foaming of its waters disappears from the mountain torrent. Observe the peaceful stream before us. It now steals quietly along—does it not, my children? looking as if no power had ever disturbed its course."

"Yes," said Agnes, gazing at it in admiration; "it appears just like a huge unbroken mirror leaning against the face of the cliff."

"And yet, perhaps, Agnes, some rude shock of nature first made that flood burst from the source; it tore up the settled earth, and rooted out each blooming plant and flower that lay within its reach. Its deep bed, however, was at last formed, and confined within the proper limits, it became a calm and useful river. Fresh flowers and plants, still fairer than the first, sprang from its source, and nourished by its purifying waters, their fruits shall live so long as the world endures."

"I like that, grandmamma," said Henry, kicking his feet together, as was his custom when any thing pleased him; for, with all his impatience and thoughtlessness of character, he had some share of sentiment about him. "I don't know why I like it, but I do like it; so pray go on."

"I like it," said Emily, her young heart overflowing at her eyes ; "I like it, because it seems to describe exactly what I have myself felt. When mamma was taken away from us, my heart for the first few months felt perpetually swelling and bursting with sorrow, beating with the fruitless wish that she were still alive and with me, and I believed I never, never should be able to think of her or speak of her again with calmness. But now I wonder why I was at first so much alarmed and agitated, so disturbed and miserable. I can think of her at present with a feeling something like joy. It is so happy to remember that she is happy, and so pleasant to feel that I can love her now almost as well as ever!"

"Yes, my beloved child, the misery of our sorrow for your sainted mother's loss is nearly worn away ; the benefit, however, remains, and will ever remain, in the calm desire and blessed hope of meeting her again. And here we are made to understand the full meaning of that simile, the truth and beauty of which cannot be surpassed : 'Thou shalt forget thy misery,' says the Bible, that book which cannot lie ; 'thou shalt forget thy misery, and

remember it as waters that pass away.' (Job xi. 16.) But let us return to our book."

"Oh yes, grandmamma! do go on with your account of Stephen," said Henry, while he kissed the tears from his sister's cheek.

"We have only to add to his history," continued Mrs. C., "one testimony of regard, which his fellow Christians paid to his memory. You know, Henry, that your birthday, or, in other words, the day of your entrance into this life, is kept with joy and pleasure by all who love you: now the friends of Stephen, those early Christians who admired his virtues, instead of wasting time in mourning over his death, determined that they would keep themselves in mind to imitate his character, by honouring the day of his martyrdom as the day of his birth, or entrance into a better life. On that day, therefore, the 26th of December, in every year, as we learn from some of the early historians of the church, they agreed to assemble, and entreat their heavenly Father that, if they should be called on, like Stephen, to suffer death in vindication of their faith, they might be enabled, like him, to draw their latest breath in testifying the truth, in declaring to the surrounding

world that Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, ever stands at the right-hand of God to hear the prayers of all who call upon his name.

“ May we, my beloved children, when called on to resign our life, whether we linger on a bed of down, surrounded by faithful and tender friends, or are hurried from existence by the hand of cruel and relentless foes, may we too, looking up steadfastly to our Redeemer, be enabled to behold his face in glory; and, asking from him the forgiveness of our sins, and pardon for all mankind, may we patiently await the moment of our falling asleep, supported by the blessed hope of awaking in the regions of eternal peace.”

* * * * *

While closing her manuscript, Mrs. C. observed with satisfaction that a pleased though thoughtful expression rested on the countenance of each of her auditors; and, desiring no other comment on her work, she arose, and proposed that they should adjourn to the house. The young people followed her, anxious to express their approbation of what they had heard; but all conversation on the subject was for the present prevented, by their meeting on the path a large party of labour

ers and other out-door servants, who, with their wives and children, were invited to attend the family service, performed every Sunday evening in the great hall, from whence the little congregation afterward retired to the steward's room, and partook of a plentiful repast.

In the course of the next week, Mrs. C. was called on to take Mary home to her parents, who resided in a distant part of the country, where the family from C—— Hall were engaged to spend some time. The young people therefore feared they should be kept for several Sundays without hearing a continuation of their new book; but their grand mother offered to carry the manuscript with her, and reminded them that she had been trained up from infancy not to let any needless ceremony or useless etiquette interrupt her course of life, or interfere with the line of conduct which she conceived it her duty to pursue. The Sunday evening reading, therefore, continued, as will be seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

LIFE AND MARTYRDOM OF SAUL OF TARSUS.

The leader of this little crew
 Seems bent some mighty deed to do,
 So steadily he speeds ;
 With lips firm clos'd, and fixed eye,
 Like warrior when the fight is nigh,
 Nor talk, nor landscape heeds.

What sudden blaze is round him pour'd,
 As though all heav'n's resplendent hoard
 In one rich glory shone ?
 One moment, and to earth he falls ;
 What voice his inmost heart appals ?
 Voice heard by him alone !

CHRISTIAN YEAR.

IT is a great blessing to religious and well-disposed persons when those whom they select for their intimate acquaintances have the same tastes and principles as themselves, and when the distribution of their time and their peculiar modes of life, instead of being opposed

and hindered by the habits of the society in which they chiefly live, are encouraged and promoted by them.

As streams flowing in the same direction unite in one common channel, and acquire an accumulated strength, so minds of similar tastes and temperament, flowing naturally together and pursuing the same course, mutually help and assist each other through those dangers and temptations which might turn them from the straight and narrow path they had chosen.

On the first Sunday evening of Mrs. C.'s visit to her best and oldest friend, she had taken her two grandchildren, Emily and Henry, into her own apartment, for the purpose of continuing their accustomed course of reading. Mary, however, soon after entered with a petition from her mamma, that the two parties should assemble in the same room, and pursue their evening occupations together.

Besides that long habits of intercourse and affection disposed these two friends to unite in most of their pursuits, Mrs. T. wished much to hear the new work of which her daughter had just been telling her, and Mrs. C. was equally anxious to have her opinion of a book

which she designed as an offering to the children of her friend, no less than as a testimony of affection for her own.

The proposal was, therefore, readily agreed to. The party adjourned to Mrs. T.'s dressing-room, and, the manuscript being put into her hand, she commenced

THE LIFE AND MARTYRDOM OF SAUL OF
TARSUS.

"On the north-east shore of the Mediterranean stood, in former days, a beautiful town, called Tarsus."

"May I see it on this globe?" said Henry.
"I do not think I ever heard of that town before."

"It is here," said Mrs. T., pointing it out as in the note;* "and though so little known to you, was once, your grandmamma's book says, the wonder and admiration of the world, not only for the beauty and convenience of its situation, and the riches of its commerce, but for the general wisdom, prudence, and learn-

* Now called Terrasso, seated on the north of the Levant.
E

ing of its inhabitants. During the time of Roman power and splendour, it was particularly honoured by that people, chiefly because it possessed a famous academy, filled with the wisest men of the age, at which many of the youth of Rome were educated ; and on this account the senate granted to the inhabitants of Tarsus all the honours and privileges of free-born citizens of Rome."

"What good did that do them ?" muttered Henry. "I do not like these proud Romans ; they always appear to think so much of themselves."

"The privilege, you will however find, did a great deal of good, during various parts of his life, to the person whose history we are relating. Among many wise sayings of the prudent inhabitants of Tarsus, there was one favourite proverb, 'that the father who did not teach his son a trade, taught him to be a thief.' And no man was accounted wise who had not himself been brought up in conformity to it, and who did not educate his children by it also, so that they might be able to obtain an honest livelihood, should any of the frequent changes and chances of life reduce them to poverty."

"I wish I had lived in Tarsus," said Henry, "then I should have learned to be a carpenter; but go on, if you please, Mrs. T., I like the beginning of this new story very much; pray go on."

"At the far-famed academy of Tarsus was educated a young man, named Saul, whose parents had early taught him to be a tent maker. He was a person of great talent and cleverness, and his learning and ability had, even while he was a youth, brought him into great repute among his friends, and in his native city. In a short time, he became perfectly instructed in every branch of knowledge; and had so far outstripped the best and wisest of his young companions in the schools, that his reputation spread rapidly over all the surrounding country. He was well acquainted with both ancient and modern literature; equally familiar with all authors of note, whether Jewish or heathen; but, like too many young persons of the present day, he was proud of his learning, vain of his talents, and blinded by an idea that the opinions he had formed, whatever they might be, were wiser and better than those adopted by other people."

"How much I should have disliked him!" said Henry; "yet I suppose I ought to like everybody I read of in the Bible."

Mrs. T. smiled. "He was violent in his temper, fiery and impetuous in whatever he undertook."

"Oh, then I am sure I should not have liked him," said again the warm and kind-hearted Henry.

"He was, besides all this, the Scriptures say, 'a Hebrew of the Hebrews;' which means that he was in the fullest sense of the word a Jew; being educated a Hebrew, as well as born of Hebrew parents. Of his birth he was particularly proud, as he was called after the first Jewish king; and could trace his ancestors back, Henry, to your little friend Benjamin. He therefore fancied that he ought to be the champion of the Jewish people; and imagined he could never do enough in support of their ancient faith.

"Having been, as was before said, brought up from his youth after the strictest customs of his religion, he was zealous beyond measure for its honour; and persecuted as its enemies, even to death, all who bore the Christian name. It was he who, as I have

before observed, kept the clothes of the witnesses when the cruel execution of Stephen commenced; and if he did not himself throw the first stone, he at least stood by, consenting to the murder.

“Far from being softened by the mild faith and patient fortitude of the martyr, the fiery Saul felt only incensed by his immoveable constancy, and not less so by that of all the other disciples, with whose conduct he became acquainted. He therefore made sad havoc among them, entering into every house, seizing both men and women, and causing them, wherever he was able, to be put to death.

“Hearing that a number of these poor, persecuted Christians had escaped from Jerusalem; and that they were spreading the new faith in Damascus, Saul, yet more enraged, procured a commission from the high-priest to pursue them, and to bring them back in chains to be slain. It was a tedious journey, in a hot climate, under a burning sky; but nothing could overcome his eagerness to destroy the helpless objects of his hatred.

“He set out upon his merciless expedition, and pursuing his way, at length drew near to the city of Damascus; when suddenly a light

from heaven, exceeding even the brightness of the summer's sun, shone round about him, and a voice—so awful that he knew it to be the voice of the Almighty—spoke to him from the light, and said, ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?’ And when he was able to speak, he answered to the voice, and said, ‘Who art thou, Lord?’ And the voice replied, in words of gentle reprobation, ‘I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.’

“And Saul, struck with astonishment, fell to the earth; and for the first time his Jewish prejudices and long-cherished obstinacy gave way. He had hitherto refused to believe in Christ, fancying that by confessing him he should deny his own religion; and feeling secure in his first opinions, he had never thoroughly considered the claims which the religion of Jesus might have to his belief.

“Surrounded by opportunities of the clearest knowledge, he had shut his eyes to the light of truth, and remained obstinately blind. How beautiful and effectual were the means which his Saviour now employed to make him feel his error! He caused, as we have already said, a miraculous light, far exceeding the splendid radiance of the sun, to fall around

the dark-benighted traveller, making it felt and seen by those who journeyed with him, though they remained uninjured by its brightness. This light the Almighty ordained should strike the persecutor blind, as an emblem of the darkness in which he had hitherto wrapped his understanding. When thus arrested, humbled, and dismayed, he fell to the earth, and the Lord called to him from out of heaven, the voice in which he spake being heard by his companions as well as by himself, although the full strength of it, as was the case also with the light, struck only the senses of him who was the object of the miracle. They indeed saw the light and heard the voice, but could not tell whence either came: Saul alone was permitted to feel the power of the one, and to understand the meaning of the other. To him the words were made intelligible; and his heart was instantly touched, and opened to a conviction of the truth.

“ Trembling and astonished, the self-condemned delinquent lay upon the ground, not daring to look up, not knowing what to do, or whither to go, when suddenly, the film falling from his understanding, he perceived that

the great Being who had thus so powerfully, yet so mercifully, dealt with him, was alone able to instruct his ignorance, and direct his path. Immediately the expression of his full and perfect belief in that Divine power burst from his lips in those emphatic words, which ought to issue from the heart of all who seek direction in the way of life : ‘*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*’ And his Lord, answering, bade him ‘Arise, and go into the city ; and that it should there be told him what he must do.’

“Nor shall we, if we turn to God in the same spirit, and seek for his guidance with equal faith, be left without our answer. To each of us, if prostrate at our Saviour’s feet, he would also kindly reply, ‘Arise, rely upon my help, and proceed fearlessly in the straight and forward path in the which I have called you to walk ; but sensible of your own blindness, search diligently in my word for direction and instruction, and wait in full assurance that it shall be told thee what thou must do.’

“I fear,” said Mrs. T., for a moment laying down the manuscript, “I fear that such an answer would not touch our hearts as quickly

as it did that of the haughty Saul. With the docility of an infant, and the subdued and humbled spirit of a sincere penitent, he arose from the earth to obey his Lord's command. He opened his eyes and tried to look abroad, but his sight was gone: he could not see which way to turn, and his companions were obliged to lead him, a helpless wanderer, into that city to which he had been going for the purpose of depriving his fellow-creatures of the light of life.

"He was soon lodged in the house of a friend, where he remained three days in darkness, and without food, his mind wholly occupied by the desire of knowing what he ought to do; and the time, doubtless, spent for the most part in fervent prayer to Almighty God. Then again his blessed Saviour conferred with him by a miraculous revelation, making known to him all that the other apostles had been previously taught during their intercourse with Himself on earth; and thus he was enabled to go like them and preach the gospel to all mankind."

"Saul had disbelieved Stephen's assertion, that he saw Jesus standing in the heavens," said Mary; "but now that he had himself

seen our Saviour standing there, he must have understood that the martyr had only spoken truth."

" Yes, Mary ; when he had seen the same glorious apparition, he probably thought of Stephen with sorrow and contrition ; for his whole heart, it appears, was turned from its former hardness and unbelief. And perhaps it may appear, among the disclosures of the last day, that Stephen's prayer, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,' was answered, and more than answered, in the conversion of this infuriated persecutor. He continued to pray fervently for direction ; and as he prayed in penitence and faith, the same kind Saviour who, as I have just observed, will hear your petitions and mine, when we supplicate with equal self-abasement, heard this contrite sinner, and mercifully interceded with the Father to grant him the request of his heart.

" In the town of Damascus there lived a man named Ananias, one of those poor persecuted disciples whom Saul had come to bind and kill. This person was at that very moment in apprehension of the arrival of the persecutor, having heard that he was coming to Damascus for the express purpose of de-

stroying all the Christians who were there. To him, however, our Saviour made known the present situation of their enemy, announcing that he had appointed Saul to be henceforward one of the most useful ministers in the service of the church. Now Ananias was a sincere follower of Christ, and we know that no jealous feeling or bitter recollection of past injuries can rankle in the Christian heart. He, therefore, forgetting all Saul's cruelty, came straightway into his presence, and putting his arms about him, called him his brother, and told him that their common Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, had sent him to be his comforter, and to say that now, since he was sincerely penitent, the blindness with which he had been afflicted was removed both from his sight and from his understanding: and immediately Saul received sight, and arose, and had himself baptized.

“ After this he remained in Damascus for a time, preaching in the synagogues; proving that this Jesus, whom he had formerly denied, was indeed the very Christ, the Messias who was expected to come, and who should change the laws of Moses, and one day rule over the

whole world with the spirit of peace, and righteousness, and love.

“ His brethren at Damascus were amazed and confounded to find that he, a Jew, the very man who had come there to deny Christ, and to destroy his followers, was himself anxiously teaching and preaching the doctrines of Christianity ; but they let him alone, probably believing that he only feigned this new character, that it was but a trick devised to entrap the Christians, or that, at the worst, it was only some fit of enthusiasm which would soon wear away.

“ Their forbearance, though but for the present, was favourable to Saul. Not being permitted by his heavenly Father to return into Jerusalem, lest it might afterward be said that he had conferred with the apostles, or learned from them that gospel which had been delivered to him from above by means so miraculous, he went into Arabia, and there taught as he had received of the Lord, converting numbers to the faith.

“ After three years, he again returned to Damascus ; and, pitying the blindness of his brethren who were still in ignorance and

hard-hearted unbelief, he tried to enlighten their understanding, and to instruct them in the truth."

"How angry they must all have been to find their most zealous and able champion still against them! I wonder what they did when thoroughly assured of the fact," said Agnes.

"They immediately took counsel together how they might put him to death. They watched day and night, lying in wait and lurking about the gates and corners of the city, to seize him, rejoicing in their belief that he could not escape from their hands; but their lying in wait was known to the disciples, and they resolved, if God permitted, that they would save him, or die in the attempt."

"I wonder, grandmamma, that God did not take him away by some great miracle."

"It is true, my child, that God could have led him out of Damascus by a miracle equal to that which he employed in bringing him into that place; but our heavenly Father in wisdom avoids the use of supernatural power whenever simple and natural means are sufficient. He therefore rather chose to let the disciples show their forgiving spirit towards

one who had dealt so hardly with them, by permitting them to become the instruments of his deliverance ; they too could watch and lie in wait, and show their zeal and courage in a worthy cause. So they guarded Saul by night and day, and at last contrived to get him secretly into one of their houses ; and while the Jews were lurking about and looking for him in the streets, they put him into a basket, to which they had fastened strong ropes, and slung him down through a window from the back of the house to the ground, and thus he escaped from his persecutors. Then some of the disciples met him outside the town, and accompanied him on his journey to Jerusalem. His enemies were still tormenting themselves, watching and waiting to catch him, while he was quietly travelling towards the holy city, where he soon arrived in perfect safety. Here he wished to make himself known to the apostles, whom he had formerly persecuted, and to tell them how sorry he now was for all the wrongs he had done to them and to their brethren. He longed to solicit their forgiveness, and to show them that he was now become a fellow Christian and fellow-sufferer with themselves."

"I suppose the apostles at Jerusalem had long since heard of his conversion," said Emily.

"The intercourse between that place and Damascus was not great; the means of communication in those times very tedious; and if some slight rumour of the circumstance did reach the city, it is probable it was not believed, since the apostles had not received any information from Saul upon the subject."

"It seems extraordinary," said Mary, "that Saul should not immediately have written to tell them what had happened to him."

"It does; but you will find from your Bible, that the revelation he had received from on high forbade for a time his having any intercourse with the disciples in that place."

"And why was their intercourse forbidden, mamma?"

"The study of the book I have just mentioned, my dear girl, would discover to you the reason. The Almighty willed, our manuscript goes on to say, that he should have no communication with the apostles until he had first planted a Christian church at a distance from them, and without their counsel or assistance. He was therefore sent to quite a differ-

ent part of the world, and there made to teach what had been immediately and miraculously revealed to him by Jesus Christ from heaven. The apostles, meantime, without any knowledge of what he was about, taught in those countries where they were appointed to labour, all that had been revealed to them by their blessed Master while he was with them on earth. Then afterward, when the followers of these separate teachers met, and when the churches of each were compared, it was found that they had all been instructed in the same doctrines and the same faith, without even a shade of variation."

"Oh!" said Mary, "what a clear proof that seems to me of the truth of our religion! I wonder it never struck me before while I was reading the Bible."

"Probably because you never read it with sufficient attention to make the discovery. It is the fault of youth, and often too of age, to read the sacred volume with inattention, by which means we lose much pleasure as well as much profit."

"I have heard you say, mamma, that faults always bring their own punishment, and this is one proof that you are right."

"They always do, my love. Besides the punishment due to them hereafter, it has been wisely ordered that they should also be attended with some evil consequence in this life. Even Saul experienced the truth of this assertion, when, on coming to Jerusalem, he found himself universally shunned by the persons whose friendship he was now most anxious to obtain. Though he addressed himself to the Christians as their friend and brother, no one could rely on him. They had known his former temper and principles, but they knew nothing of his present feelings and persuasion, and were therefore afraid to admit him into their society, thinking it very likely that he might be one of those wolves in sheep's clothing against whom their blessed Lord had so often warned them. At length Barnabas, being convinced of his sincerity, brought him to Peter, who received him kindly, and they led him to James, who was then exercising his apostolical office at Jerusalem, who also welcomed him, and listened with attention to his account of the manner in which he had been converted. Having heard his statement, they all felt increased gratitude to their heavenly Father, who had

thus so wonderfully changed their bitterest enemy into their most useful and zealous friend.

“Saul was able to stay at Jerusalem only fifteen days, for God warned him in a vision that the Jews were again at work to entrap him, and that as his brethren in that place had other teachers, and would not from prejudice and ill-will attend to his instructions, it was better he should go again and preach among the gentiles, who had no unfavourable pre-possessions against him, and to whom he could, therefore, be of more use. He accordingly set out, accompanied by some of the brethren; and coming to Cesarea, from thence took his way back to his native city, from which he had been so long absent, and where he was now able to instruct those who had formerly instructed him. After a short stay in that place, he went with Barnabas to Antioch, where he remained an entire year (a long season of rest for him), propagating the faith with such success that he was able to establish a church there also. It was here, and at this time, that the followers of Jesus Christ were first called Christians; but it is not clearly known whether they assumed that

name themselves, or whether it was given them as a term of reproach by their enemies. Be that as it may, it is now a title of honour and distinction, in which all who hold it must glory ; a name which is to prosper and increase until it shall spread through every land, and cover all the regions of the earth.

“ It would be tedious to tell you the many countries into which Saul travelled, north, south, east, and west, for the purpose of spreading the gospel. But when you are all older, it will interest you much to trace his various wanderings, and to observe the strange ignorance, fickleness, and folly that reigned in the different places where he taught. In some, they would listen to him to-day and laugh at him to-morrow ; in others, unmoved by all his preaching, and heedless of all his miracles, they beat, stoned, scourged, and persecuted him at one time, and immediately after fell down before him, offered him sacrifice, and attempted to worship him as a god.”

“ What fools they must have been !” cried Henry ; “ I suppose Saul did not find any churches among them.”

“ You mistake, Henry ; though many people rejected both him and his gospel, yet he

was enabled to make some converts. He succeeded, indeed, in establishing churches even in places the least favourable to his design. It is surprising, indeed, that he did not grow weary of his labours; for through them all, the malice of the Jews pursued him with unrelenting hatred. They defamed him everywhere, and still more strongly testified their dislike as he more clearly displayed his charity, and showed the sincerity of his wishes for their conversion. In one place they stoned him, not quitting their attack until they supposed him dead; and in many others he was scourged a second time with the greatest barbarity, and was constantly driven with violence and ignominy from those cities where, as a Roman, the people dared not to touch his person or endanger his life. But when they persecuted him in one place, he only fled to another, trying with more anxious zeal to spread the mild and peaceful doctrines of the Christian faith. In the course of these exertions, he proved by signs and wonders, and mighty deeds,—an account of which you can read in the Bible much better than I can tell it here,—that he had indeed been gifted with power from on high, and that the gospel

which he preached was that which he had received from the Lord."

"Was he able to work miracles?" asked Henry.

"Yes, my dear; God thought proper to bestow on Saul the power of working miracles, that he might at once be able to convince his hearers of his right to teach, and of the truth of what he taught."

"It was, I suppose, for the same reason that he gave the other apostles equal power," said Agnes; "and I am only surprised that he does not continue it to his ministers at the present day."

"No, my love; now that the religion of his Son Jesus is sufficiently established to be sure of increasing by ordinary means," said Mrs. C., "God sees it no longer needful to give this power to any of his creatures; but in the first days of the church, when such proof of its divine origin was absolutely requisite, it was not withheld. Besides endowing the apostles with a capacity to work miracles with their own hands, God also frequently performed great wonders in their behalf by his own arm, or what is called his immediate agency."

"How do you mean, grandmamma? I do not understand that," said Henry, who was beginning to get a little inattentive.

"You probably may understand it better when you have heard an instance now to be related of God's having displayed his power and goodness towards Saul in the manner to which I have just alluded. You may, however, find the same story much better told in the Acts of the Apostles, xvi. 26. In the mean time, let me ask if you have ever heard of a place called Philippi?"

"Philippi, oh yes; and I do wonder if Bucephalus had a long cocked tail, wavering about like my pony's!"

The reader, if not well skilled in such wanderings of an eight-years-old imagination, will probably be at no little loss to follow the train of ideas by which this strange answer was suggested. It appeared that Henry, while listening to the manuscript, had been busily engaged in taking a likeness (a most striking one in his eyes) of *Midge*, his little pony, and Mrs. C. thought it best to let him put the last touch to the cocking of its tail, before she again asked him to carry back his ideas to Philippi. Seeing the paper at length

held up at proper distance, and laid down again with an air of satisfaction, she ventured to repeat her question.

“ You have not then forgotten that there is such a place as Philippi, Henry ?”

“ No, grandmamma ; I remember learning in my geography that it is a chief town in Macedon. I recollect it because it was called after Philip of Macedon ; and I remember him because he was the father of Alexander.”

“ And why has Alexander made you remember them both so well ?”

“ Oh, because you know he is my friend and favourite of all heroes : but the first thing that ever made me like him was his being so clever about taming and managing Bucephalus.”

“ Bucephalus has, indeed, been a captivating steed to you, and, I believe, many other boys before you, as well as to Alexander the Great. He has, at all events, proved an excellent remembrancer at present. And as he brought you so cleverly to Philippi, I hope you will not let him run away with you from that place until we shall be ready to travel together into some other.”

Henry, now satisfied with his work, turned the paper downward on the table, and prepared to listen with more attention, while Mrs. T. began a new chapter.

CHAPTER III.

**SAUL IN PRISON AT PHILIPPI; AND IN
THE AREOPAGUS AT ATHENS.**

"OUR history must now accompany the apostle to Philippi. He went thither, not as he was once, an angry avenger, borne perhaps on a fiery steed with much parade of strength and power, to strike terror into the minds of the timid, but he appeared as a meek and humble teacher, clad only in the armour of righteousness, and bent on no other warfare than that against sin and Satan. He went to make known the gospel of peace, and to convert sinners to salvation, and his endeavours were attended with even more than his usual success.

"His first proselyte in this place was Lydia of Thyatira, a person who, from hearing him preach, had grown desirous of becoming a Christian. In a short time both she and her

whole family were baptized ; and she never afterward allowed her instrucuter to quit her house while he remained at Philippi.

"A little way out of this town, close by the river's bank, there was a proseucha, or open place for prayer ; and hither Saul frequently led this good and happy family for the exercise of their religious duties. Now, it happened that on their way there, they were often followed by a girl who pretended to great wisdom, and who made the people of Philippi believe that she could foretel any future event. She was servant-maid to an inhabitant of the city, who called her a Pythoness ; and she brought her master great gains by the strange and seemingly wise things she said.

" You remember, Henry, no doubt, the copper-coloured gipsy who used to frighten you so much when we were in England."

Henry.—" Oh yes, grandmamma, quite well."

Grandmamma.—" Well, just as she got money for telling the poor people of that country their fortunes, we may iimagine this girl at Philippi did."

Henry.—" Yes, yes, just in that manner, I

dare say. Emily, let us always call that nasty, wicked-looking gipsy the Pythoness of Westonbirt."

"The Pythoness of Philippi, however," resumed Mrs. T., "was much more successful and more cunning than your poor ragged friend in England.

'Knowing that she should probably be driven away, or compelled to keep silence, if she said or did any thing strikingly improper towards a set of people who were quietly assembling to perform the duty of prayer, this wicked girl endeavoured to disturb them by repeatedly crying out aloud, that they were the servants of the true God, who had come to show the way of salvation to the world.

"Saul, aware that she was moved to say this by the spirit of malice and wickedness, and not by the spirit of truth, ordered her to cease speaking, and commanded the evil spirit to depart from her, when she instantly became dumb, and could no longer play her part, or pretend to prophecy, as she had formerly done. Her master, finding himself thus deprived of such a gainful trade, fell into great wrath and immediately resolved to have revenge. He accordingly, with many of his companions,

laid hold of Saul and dragged him, as well as Silas, before the council-seat, telling the governors that they were wicked and troublesome Jews, who were changing the customs and breaking the laws of the Roman empire.

“ Both magistrates and people were ready enough to take up the cause; so the former quickly gave sentence against the two apostles, and the people joyfully prepared to put it in force.

“ They were both stripped, tied, and barbarously scourged; after which they were thrown into prison to be brought out next day for execution; and the keeper of the prison was ordered to watch them with all possible care and strictness, lest any attempt should be made by their friends to set them free. The jailer, to make sure of his charge, thrust them into an inner dungeon, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

“ Secure that no possibility of escape remained, he withdrew to his repose in a place apart, leaving them in certain expectation of the fate which awaited them next day.”

“ Oh how terrified they must have been!” said Emily; “ I wonder how they passed the night.”

"I wonder how you or I should have passed it," said Mary.

"In great misery and terror, I am certain."

"That question," said Mrs. C., "no person here can answer. We probably all think that we should have been overwhelmed with terror, that we should have mourned and lamented the whole night long; but in such situations there is always One at hand who can uphold the weakest: he would have been assuredly near. Yes, my children, he would have been near even to us, unworthy as we are, and he might have turned our mourning into joy. But-although we cannot be certain of our own conduct," said Mrs. T., "of this we are well informed, that Saul and Silas felt neither sorrow nor terror. They waited for the coming morn as for the dawning of a happy day, which they knew would either set them free or light them into life eternal. They prayed to their heavenly Father in their Saviour's name; he heard their petition, and all the bitterness of death was made to pass from their minds. At midnight their fellow-prisoners, instead of groans and lamentations, heard them singing sweet hymns of praise and thanksgiving to God."

"Oh how good and how courageous they must have been!" cried Henry.

"In the midst of those sweet tones, however, the ears of the prisoners were assailed by other sounds, less strange indeed than these, but much more awful and appalling; the soft songs of praise to which they had been listening were quickly silenced; loud peals of thunder, and dreadful hissings, as of a tempest, broke in upon the stillness of the night, and lightnings flashed around the cells.

"Suddenly the ground rocked beneath them, and a fearful earthquake shook the foundations of the prison.

"The doors flew open! the chains fell from the prisoners' feet, and all stood free!

"The jailer was the last person awakened by the noise; and when he saw the door standing wide open, he started from his couch in terror, supposing the apostles and all the other prisoners had fled. In case they were gone, he was aware that his own life would be taken in a public and disgraceful manner; and not knowing that there was any crime in the act, he drew his sword, and would have killed himself on the spot; but Saul called out

aloud, beseeching him to stop, declaring that they were all still safe in the prison, and that neither he nor his companion had any intention of escaping. Then calling for a light, the jailer sprang in and fell down before them, expressing both his sorrow for the treatment they had received, and his belief in the miracle which he perceived had been just wrought in their behalf. He brought them out from the inner dungeon, and with much anxiety asked them to explain the doctrines of their faith. He heard, and was convinced. Unable to resist the force and loveliness of all they taught, his heart turned to the living God, and he cried out with fervour, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’”

Here Mrs. T. laid down the MS., being called away for a few moments; and the old lady, drawing Henry to her side, said to him, “ You too, Henry, will, I trust, one day make the same inquiry which fell from the lips of the good jailer at Philippi. May you, my beloved child, make it with equal sincerity and humility of heart !”

“ But the jailer was not a Christian, grand-mamma ; people who are born Christians . I suppose, need not ask that question.”

"Were you born a Christian, Henry?"

"Yes, surely," said he, laughing; "you know I was, grandmamma."

"How do I know it, my child?"

"Oh! you know I was born—born—that is, I was born—"

"I know certainly that you were born," said Mrs. C., smiling in her turn; "nay, I know still further, that you were born in a Christian land—but what you mean by being born a Christian is more, Henry, than I understand."

"Oh! indeed, grandmamma, I think you know quite well what I mean."

"Then try, my child, if you can yourself explain your meaning."

"Why, papa is a Christian, and you are a Christian, and all my friends are Christians."

"And does that make you a Christian?"

"I believe so."

"Try again, my child; with a little reflection you will be able to explain yourself better, and perhaps to answer also the jailer's question! Tell me, then, what must you do to be saved?"

A long silence ensued.

"I cannot answer the question now, grand-mamma ; but when I am old, I am sure I shall be able to answer it."

"Merely growing old will never make you able to give it a reply, Henry ; but I will hope, before that time arrives, that by the blessing of Him who is the only sufficient teacher, you may be instructed how to answer it.

"The tongue which now speaks to you will, most probably, be then no longer able to repeat the question : the aching limbs whose pains you now so often try to alleviate will by that time lie at rest ; and the heart which at present beats with so much interest both for your temporal and eternal happiness will then be still. Yes, Henry, provided it shall have continued steadfast and faithful according to the answer to the jailer's demand, it may then be at peace for ever in the mansions of eternal rest ! Will you, then, my beloved boy—will you for the sake of one who has so tenderly loved you, and whom you have so tenderly loved in return—will you promise to ask your own heart when grown to manhood, if you can give a reply to the simple question (and may divine grace, my child, enable you

to recall and effectually to fulfil the engagement), ‘Lord, what must I do to be saved?’”

The volatile, but deeply feeling and affectionate boy replied, by turning towards her his eyes filled with tears, and tenderly kissing her pallid cheek.

“I will not repeat the apostle’s answer here, because I wish you to seek it for yourself at the fountain head; and if you receive it into an humble and good heart, not only will it be the means of saving your own soul, but it will induce you to train up your children and dependants safe from the wickedness of the world, and make you an instrument of salvation to them and to your whole house.”

“I will go to the Bible and look for the answer the moment we have done reading, if you do not forbid me,” said Henry.

His grandmamma made no objection; and Mrs. T., just then entering, continued her narrative: “On hearing Saul’s answer, the jailer resolved unhesitatingly to embrace the Christian faith. He instantly set about dressing the wounds which had been inflicted on the two disciples the day before, took them into that part of the prison which was called his

own house, and sent such a message to the town magistrates as induced them to order that the two Christians should be allowed to escape."

"I suppose," said Henry, "they got away as fast as ever they could, for fear the magistrates should change their minds."

"Not so, Henry; Saul, who knew that it was contrary to the laws of every nation, but more especially to those of the Romans, to beat or imprison any one without just cause, determined to remain until his own and his friend's innocence should be acknowledged. He knew, that as the scourging and confinement inflicted on them had probably brought the Christian name into disgrace, so their public acquittal would bring it again to honour, and might help still further to spread the knowledge of the faith. He therefore refused to depart in secret. 'They have beaten us openly, and cast us into prison uncondemned, although we are Romans,' said he to the sergeants who had been sent to him by the magistrates; 'and would they now thrust us out privately? No! let them publicly declare our innocence, and come themselves to bring us out.'

"The magistrates, on hearing they were Romans, were thrown into great alarm, and immediately went to the prison to set them at liberty, beseeching them to overlook the treatment they had received, and to quit the city without making any complaint.

"With this request, Saul charitably complied, only waiting so long as was necessary to show himself once more to the kind-hearted Lydia, and his other friends at Philippi, to comfort and encourage them, before he set forward on a mission to other towns.

"In these, he met with treatment as various as that he had before received, being sometimes befriended and sometimes buffeted, in some places revered and in others reviled, according to the character of the people among whom he chanced to mingle: but nothing turned him aside from his duty.

"Among other places, he came to Berea, where, after he had been for some time preaching with great success, making many converts, his enemies from a distant quarter came and stirred up the people against him, insomuch that the disciples were obliged to force him away from the town, in order to preserve his life. While some of his friends

feigned to send him off by sea, others got him privately out of the place, Silas and Timotheus remaining behind to bear the anger of the people, and to prevent the discovery of his flight. His conductors, who would not quit him until they had brought him in safety to Athens, received there his warmest thanks, and also an urgent entreaty to return with speed unto Berea, for the purpose of assisting his two beloved companions in escaping thence, and coming after him to his present abode.

“While waiting in much anxiety for their arrival, he occupied himself by going about the city,—then one of the most renowned in the whole world for its antiquity, as well as for its arts, sciences, and every other species of human knowledge,— remarking whatever might be useful to his purpose in the manners, customs; and practices of its inhabitants.

“In passing by one of the most public and beautiful squares of the town, he was shocked and astonished to see a number of persons worshipping before an altar, on which was written this inscription: ‘To the *unknown God.*’

“He had indeed known before that the peo-

ple were idolaters, worshipping a host of creatures of their own fanciful creation ; but he had now to learn, that, not satisfied with the multitude of their idols, and afraid lest any god should have been omitted, who, on account of such neglect, might bring a plague upon their city, the superstitious Athenians had also erected this altar to the unknown and dreaded being, whom they daily implored with an anxiety and fervour which might put to blush the lukewarm professors of our better faith.

“ Inspired with pity for their ignorance, and believing that they really wished to be religious if they knew but how, Saul addressed those who were kneeling at the altar, and spake to them with such gentle and persuasive eloquence that he speedily won their attention. He therefore continued there for some time, frequently reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and devout persons, and daily in the market with them that met him, until at last certain philosophers, who, instead of worshipping a variety of gods, doubted the existence of even one, sought him out, and desired to know what this new doctrine, whereof he spake, might be.

"There was at Athens a hill called Areopagus, and on it was erected a public building or court of justice, known by the same name, where all questions of high importance were debated, particularly matters belonging to religion. To this place, therefore, they brought Saul, as an assertor of doctrines which had never before been heard of, saying that he seemed to be a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached Jesus and the resurrection.

"What a spacious field was now laid open for sowing the good seed ! Here, before an immense assembly eager to hear him—for the Athenians and strangers who were there spent their time, say the Scriptures, in nothing else but in hearing or telling some new thing—before people of every different rank, sect, and opinion, citizens, strangers, philosophers, was our apostle publicly called on to explain this new and, to them, extraordinary faith.

"Saul could not but rejoice at the glorious opportunity which was thus afforded him for the manifestation of the truth. He arose, therefore, and stood forth in the midst of the Areopagus, and, with admirable skill adapting his discourse to meet and obviate some error

or prejudice in each party present, he at once frankly commenced his explanation, by referring to their superstitious worship of an unknown God; declaring to them at the same time, that He whom they thus ignorantly worshipped, the only God with whom they seemed really unacquainted, was he who made the world and all things therein; 'in whom they all lived, and moved, and had their being,' and through whom they might yet be raised from death to life eternal. For a particular account of his discourse, I refer you to the short but comprehensive sketch given of it in the 17th chapter of the Acts, with which you are all, no doubt, already well acquainted.

"He was listened to with profound attention; but on hearing of the resurrection, some mocked, and others went away undecided, saying they would hear him again upon the subject; but many clave unto him, and believed; among whom were Dionysius, one of the cleverest and most learned senators of the court, and a female of rank, named Damaris. Now both these persons were great favourites with the emperor, whose name was Nero, and who was one of the most wicked and cruel

sovereigns that ever appeared in the world. He either had made or wished to make Damaris his wife, although he had many other wives besides ; and he was greatly enraged when he found she was become a Christian, and had learned that the followers of Christ were bound to marry but one person, to whom they were required to be kind and faithful.

“Nero, supposing that Damaris would immediately forget the new opinions she had formed if her instructer were removed, caused Saul to be driven from Athens. But nothing could change her resolution ; she remained steadfast in the faith : and the emperor never forgave the man whom he considered his enemy on the occasion, but persecuted him with unrelenting hatred, even to the last moment of his existence.”

“I wonder he did not immediately put him to death,” said Henry.

“He could not do that, my love, one moment before the appointed time. Cruel and powerful as he was, he could exercise no power at all over Saul until it were given him from on high ; and for this the hour was not yet arrived.

“In spite of all the difficulties, opposition,

and persecution by which the apostle was surrounded, his life was always preserved, and he still went on teaching the way of salvation to mankind, reasoning and proving that Jesus was the true Messiah, and that men should everywhere repent, and turn to him for pardon and salvation. The Jews, finding that they were not able to destroy or silence him, or even to overcome him in argument, had now, on all occasions, recourse to noise and clamour, mingled with blasphemy, in order to prevent his being heard. He therefore, at different times, thought it expedient to remain quiet for a long season, rather than exasperate his enemies ; for it was his anxious wish to win all persons over to faith in Christ by kindness and the force of truth, rather than by disputes and violence.

“In such seasons he did not, however, remain idle, but was constantly employed, with the assistance of God’s holy Spirit, in writing those admonitions and directions to the churches he had planted, which are found in our Bible under the title of Paul’s Epistles.”

Henry.—“Paul, grandmamma ! Is he the same as Saul ?”

Mrs. T.—“Yes, my dear. Upon becoming

a Christian, it appears that he changed his name to Paul ; but by either of these names he was equally well known both to the Jews and Christians. His fame, indeed, spread far and near ; yet the more his virtue and wisdom became the subject of public remark and observation, the more was he persecuted by his wicked and envious brethren. But in proportion to his necessities was the assistance given to him by God : the Almighty was pleased to confirm the truth of every thing he taught, by giving him great power to work wonders, enabling him to heal diseases even by a touch, and to do many other miraculous things, the sight of which at length convinced the people that he had indeed help from on high."

CHAPTER IV

PAUL AT EPHESUS.

"AFTER a long course of labours in different places, the apostle came at last to Ephesus, and remained there, teaching both in public and private, until he had gained such a prodigious number of followers that even his enemies began to think it was vain to oppose him any longer. Suddenly, however, an accident happened—"

"Oh!" said Henry, nestling himself, as was his favourite manner, close to the reader's elbow, after having been for some minutes fidgeting about with an air that told he was beginning to get tired, "I am so glad you are coming to an accident; I always like accidents, and sentences too, that begin with '*Suddenly, however!*'"

"I fear, Henry," said Mrs. T., "we must wait a little longer for our account of this ad-

venture, and return at present to the drawing-room before we proceed further, as we have already outstaid our usual time here."

Henry entreated for a few minutes' delay; but the footman just then appearing to announce that tea was ready, he could not be indulged. He was compelled, therefore, to exercise his patience until the repast was ended; when Mrs. T., at the request of her husband, as well as of her little friend, resumed the narrative at his favourite sentence: "Suddenly an accident happened which threw Saul into great difficulty and danger. Ephesus was renowned above all the cities of the East for a very famous temple, one of the stateliest and most splendid, perhaps, in the whole world. In this temple was to be found all that was rich, and costly, and beautiful; but the most esteemed of its possessions was a very magnificent statue, representing a lovely female, from which the building took its name. This image the priests had caused to be made by the most skilful artists; and when finished, they killed or banished to a great distance all who had been in any way employed about the work. Then, when it was supposed that the cheat could not be dis-

covered, they shut up the figure within the temple, and pretending to be greatly astonished at finding it there, persuaded the people it had dropped to them down from heaven. This statue they called the great goddess Diana, and said that it must be worshipped with religious honour. The poor and ignorant of every land readily believe whatever their priests tell them ; the Ephesians, therefore, immediately fell down before the statue, lifting up their hands to it in prayer ; and in a short time, the fame both of its power and beauty spread around the country far and wide. People flocked from all quarters, not only to see but to adore it ; and it at length became a favourite object of worship even in distant regions.

“The priests then, wishing to turn it still more to their profit, resolved to shut it up, and would not let any person look upon it without paying them large sums of money. To keep alive the curiosity of the people, and to make them still anxious to behold it, small gold and silver models of the statue, placed in beautiful little chambers called shrines, were set in different parts of the temple, which might be seen for a trifle ; and to these the poor people, who could not afford to pay for

seeing the great statue, knelt down in prayer, just as they had done to the large figure."

"I suppose, Mrs. T., they were something like the little Burmese god, made of gold, that you have on the top of your cabinet."

"Perhaps so, my dear ; at all events, they were not more valuable, although the workers in gold and silver, from whom they were purchased in great numbers, gained immense wealth by making them. These persons, and the priests who employed them, were therefore sadly distressed when a new religion sprang up in their town, which taught that they should not make any image, or likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth ; that, at least, they must not make it with the intent of bowing down to it, or worshipping it."

"Foreseeing that if the Christian religion gained ground, this profitable trade must be destroyed, they concerted with Demetrius, who was the greatest silversmith in the town, and a leading man among them, to stir up the people against the Christians, and drive them from the place, first making sure to kill Paul.

"Demetrius was a great orator ; therefore,

as all persons have who express themselves fluently, he had great power over other men. He mounted a forum in the midst of the people, and told them that the chief traffic of their city was about to be destroyed ; that they would soon see their wives and children reduced to want and misery ; for that the Christians, with one Paul at their head, had perverted both town and country, persuading the multitude that the images in the temple were not real gods ; and that they ought not to be worshipped. If this were believed, he said, both their trade and the credit and glory of the great goddess Diana, who was worshipped, not only by themselves, but by the whole world, must fall to the ground.

“On hearing this address, the whole city was presently in an uproar ; the inhabitants ran about the streets in quest of the Christians, crying out that ‘Great was Diana of the Ephesians ;’ and in their search for Paul, they seized on two of his companions, and dragged them away to the theatre, thinking one of them must certainly be he. In this theatre were performed all the games and cruel sports with which these thoughtless people were fond of amusing themselves. Here

were trained those gladiators who tore each other to pieces like ferocious animals until one fell down dead; and here too were kept a number of wild beasts, lions, tigers, hyenas, and bears, ready to devour, for the diversion of the people, any wretched criminal who was condemned to die.

“For two whole hours the populace crowded the theatre, loudly extolling their goddess, and demanding permission to throw the prisoners to the wild beasts.

“Paul, hearing of the danger to which his friends were exposed, would have flown to the theatre to address the populace in their behalf; but the disciples seized him, and would not suffer him to go, well knowing that the people were resolved on putting him to death the first moment they could find him.

“Happily for the prisoners, there were some even among the managers of these cruel sports who thought it wrong to deliver up innocent people to such a dreadful death; they therefore called together the chief men of the city; one of whom, knowing the fickle character of the multitude, and how easily they were led either to one side or the other by any public speaker who had ability to take a lead

among them, mounted the forum where the silversmith had a short time before stood, and with a calm and intrepid courage reasoned with them on the impropriety of their conduct. It was foolish, he said, to risk their lives and subject themselves to punishment, by making such an uproar at the bidding of Demetrius, or any other man, since the laws were open to them, and all who had any real matter of complaint might appeal to them. He reminded them, likewise, of the heavy penalties which must be inflicted on them by the magistrates if the riot continued, and advised them all to go quietly home, lest such punishment should overtake them: and so they stole away at the bidding of this good man, leaving the prisoners to be set at liberty, and the craftsmen to fight their own battles."

"I never knew before how much good or how much harm might be done just by speaking a few words," said Henry.

"But these men were orators, Henry; they spoke distinctly, not mumbling their words like some people of my acquaintance, and they reasoned clearly on the subject of which they were speaking. Those who do so will always have power to lead their fellow-creatures, be

it from the pulpit, the forum, the field of battle, or the throne ; and those who do not will occupy even the last of those high stations unheeded and unhonoured."

"I will try to be an orator, grandmamma ; but tell me if the prisoners escaped."

"Yes ; the magistrates, finding they were innocent of all blame, immediately let them go."

"And what became of Paul ?"

"Perceiving that the Christians, now grown into a large band, would be less liable to molestation if he were absent, Paul organized them into a regular church, and having furnished it with proper officers, at the head of whom he for the present placed Timothy, a man whose piety and virtue had rendered him distinguished from his youth, he prepared to take his departure. Having been himself the instrument of Timothy's conversion, and looking upon him as his own son, he confidently resigned the flock into his hands ; and taking leave of him and all his other friends, went into Macedonia, through every part of which he preached the gospel with unwearied diligence. Thence he travelled over Greece, and through the isles of the Mediterranean. He then resolved to pass into Syria, that he

might himself carry a charitable contribution, which was offered by the churches of Corinth and Macedon, to the suffering Christians at Jerusalem, who were at this time in dreadful distress both from poverty and persecution. At Tyre, however, Paul received information that the Jews had heard he was coming to Jerusalem charged with money for the Christians, and that they had laid a plot to waylay him on the road for the purpose of killing him and carrying off the booty.

"He therefore thought it prudent to postpone his journey for a few weeks, until the expectation which the Jews had of meeting him might die away; but as he knew there was no other means of conveying relief to the Christians, he would not delay his journey beyond that time. He accordingly took his departure from Tyre, and was followed to the shore by a multitude of friends, all entreating that he would not go, and predicting that if he did he would assuredly be killed at Jerusalem. But Paul was not to be moved from what he knew to be his duty: so when they saw that they could not make him change his determination, the whole company knelt down on the shore, and put up supplications for his

safety to Him who was alone able to protect him ; and Paul, having tenderly embraced them one by one, took his leave and went on board a ship that was waiting, which soon brought him to Cesarea.

"Here again he was surrounded by the Christians, who all passionately besought him to turn his steps from Jerusalem, foretelling that if he persisted in going, some dreadful evil would befall him ; and among the rest, Agabus, an old Christian prophet, announced to him, that if he went he would unquestionably be thrown into prison, be held long in bonds, and finally be put to death."

"And did he still persist in going ?" asked Emily.

"Yes, my love ; their entreaties could not alter his sense of duty. He knew that neither good nor evil could befall him without the will of his heavenly Father ; therefore he besought his friends not to add to his sorrow by trying to dissuade him from his purpose. He declared to them that he had no apprehension, and that he was willing to be imprisoned at Jerusalem ; or, if need were, to die in any part of the world for the sake of Christ, and of his religion.

"His friends then, seeing his resolution unalterably fixed, importuned him no further, but, like himself, expressed their willingness to leave the event to Divine Wisdom. Many of them resolved to be the companions of his journey; and when every thing was ready, they all set forward on their way together, and, contrary to their expectations, God brought them through every danger in safety to Jerusalem, where they were kindly and joyfully received by the Christians."

CHAPTER V.

PAUL ARRAIGNED AT JERUSALEM—APPEALS
TO CESAR AT ROME—VOYAGE THITHER.

“ THEN the Jews did not waylay Saul, and rob him,” said Henry.

“ No ; they had, I suppose, become tired of waiting for him ; but within a few days after his arrival, when he was in the temple, where, by the advice of James and all the Christian elders of Jerusalem, he had immediately shown himself, and conformed to the laws of purification, that it might be seen that he was not a despiser of their customs, and a subverter of order, the Jews laid hold of him ; and had not the commander of the garrison humanely rescued him out of their hands, they would have immediately put him to death. The officer, to preserve his life, shut him up in a strong place called the castle of Antonia, where, however, he was loaded with chains until it should be known what cause of com-

plaint the people had against him, and what offence they laid to his charge.

“Against this treatment Paul expostulated, as contrary to the rights and privileges of a Roman: and the governor, being informed that he was a free-born citizen of 'Tarsus, ordered his chains to be struck off, and commanded that he should be immediately examined on the various accusations brought against him by the high-priests.

“The next day he was accordingly called before his accusers; but a great dissension arising among them, and a conspiracy being discovered against his life, he was removed to Cesarea, and thence after two years to Rome. During this interval he had been examined, first before the governor Felix, and then before Festus, who succeeded him, and also before king Agrippa, and had been pronounced innocent; but as he had himself appealed to Cesar, Festus was obliged to send him.

“He was placed under the safe-conduct of a certain Julius, a Roman commander, who had charge of several other prisoners besides; and the evangelist Luke, who now never left him, and some others of his Christian com-

panions, determined to accompany him on the voyage ; and all, having immediately embarked in a vessel then starting for Sidon, were quickly brought into that port.

“ So much had the piety, the mild behaviour, and honourable principles of our apostle won on Julius during the voyage, that he granted him permission to go on shore, and remain with some friends who resided in the town while the ship lay in harbour.”

“ Julius must have felt quite sure that he would have come back,” said Henry.

“ Yes, Henry ; one happy effect produced by honourable conduct and the strict principle of truth is, that none are ever afraid to trust those in whom they are found.

“ Paul returned at the moment appointed, and the ship being again victualled, they continued their course to a place called the Fair Havens, near Myra, a city of Syria ;” ‘ which, by-the-by, it would be well if we looked for on the map,’ said Mrs. T.

“ Oh do let me look for it, Emily,” said Henry ; “ I love to find out places on the map, and it is so pleasant, too, to feel that one can do it.”

“ Very pleasant, my boy, and very useful

too, to be able to use a map," said Mrs. C.; "but you should never deprive other people of a pleasure, merely because you wish for it yourself."

"But, grandmamma, it is no pleasure to Emily now, because she is very old, and can always put down her forefinger on whatever place she wishes to find on any map, just the minute she is asked."

"Well," said Emily, laughing, "when you are *very old*, Henry, you will have an advantage over me; for, as a man, you will probably be able to put your feet where I am only able to put my forefinger."

"And I shall like that very much," he replied; "but in the mean time help me to find 'Fair Havens,' for I cannot see it anywhere."

"Here it is, in the ancient map of the Mediterranean, just close to Myra, where grandmamma said it was," said his sister.

"I suppose it was a very pretty place by its being called '*Fair Havens*.'"

"It was called so because it was less dangerous than any of the other ports around; but less dangerous as it was, it was such an inconvenient harbour that the master of the ship felt anxious to get away. It was, how-

ever, necessary to stop in some port until the short winter of that climate should be over ; and as it was fast approaching, Paul advised him, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of the harbour, to remain where he was, rather than brave the stormy seas through which they must pass to reach a safer. But the master persisted, and even Julius, forgetful of Paul's wisdom, and of his acquaintance with the navigation of that coast, preferred the less prudent course, and advised that they should try to reach Phœnix, a port of the island of Crete, before the stormy season quite set in. You will see by the map that they had not any great distance to sail ; but Paul, who understood both the sea and the seasons better than any of them, still tried to dissuade them from the voyage ; they would not, however, listen to his advice, and being deceived by a calm southerly breeze which gently filled their sails, they got out of the port, and bore down towards Phœnix.

“ You have heard me, my children, describe the tempests which I have frequently witnessed in the Mediterranean ; but in these parts, towards the eastern extremity of that sea, especially all through the Euxine and the

Archipelago, the storms are dark and terrific in the extreme. The sky seems to descend in one heavy mass of black impenetrable cloud, lying close down on the bosom of the deep ; and the vexed waters, as if disturbed and encumbered by its weight, begin immediately to swell and raise themselves in angry billows against its pressure. In the midst of this thick darkness, the only objects which can be discerned are the white heads of the foaming billows making themselves apparent at distant intervals through the gloom ; and the only sound which meets the ear is the distant groaning of the deep unfathomable tide, whose fearful roaring is a certain and awful indication of the coming tempest. In a short time forked lightnings flash across the atmosphere, cutting it now here now there, as if only desirous to make its density and extent more apparent. Thunders then begin to peal, sounding as if Alps on Alps, in one vast avalanche, were tumbling overhead. Then follows rain, not in drops and showers as you have seen it in this our native country, but in one continued torrent, falling so close, so heavy, that it seems as if new seas were pouring from the skies to form another ocean upon earth.

“This rain continues sometimes for many days, and gradually, as it increases, the massive darkness of the atmosphere breaks into separate openings, through each of which a tempestuous wind, called the euroclydon, finds a ready passage. It sweeps in hurricanes round every cloud, at every turning encountering itself, and with irresistible violence hurls to destruction whatever is within the circle of its furious course.”

“In what a fearful state the unfortunate passengers in any ship must be during such a storm,” said Mary.

“So fearful that all good navigators endeavoured, by calculating the usual signs and seasons of their approach, to avoid exposure to such danger: but Julius and the captain of Paul’s ship refused to listen to the voice of reason and experience; and they soon suffered for their temerity.

“The ship had nearly gained the wished-for harbour, when the soft south breeze which had hitherto favoured them sank into stillness; the darkness fell, the flood lifted up its waves, and in a shorter time than usual, a storm arose which bore down all before it

The vessel was caught up, as it were, between the elements, and could not continue any direct course, being tossed and driven in every direction at the mercy of the wind and tide. Sails or helm were now of no avail, and on the third day the passengers were forced to lighten the vessel, by throwing overboard all the tackling and lading they could spare, and so drive before the wind. During this time, and for many days after, neither sun, nor moon, nor stars appeared, and the tempest lay upon them with such tremendous violence, that every hope was taken away from the stoutest seamen on board."

"Was not Paul terribly frightened by such a tempest?" said Henry.

"No, my dear; Paul, who had before encountered perils both by sea and land, was not appalled, but was able calmly to resign himself to the will of his almighty Father. He knew, however, the extremity of their danger, and he prayed with fervent devotion for the preservation of the whole ship's company. His petition was not only heard, but graciously answered. After long abstinence he stood forth among the crew, and exhorted them all

to be of good cheer, assuring them that ‘there should be no loss of any man’s life, but only of the ship. For,’ said he, ‘there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Cæsar; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs,’ he added, ‘be of good cheer, for I believe that it shall be even as it was told me—every one of you shall be preserved.’ He, however, announced to them that they should have to suffer much, and that they should be driven on an island, where the ship would be destroyed.

“Fourteen days and nights did the storm continue, while each hour they were driven about more furiously than before. At length, at midnight on the fourteenth day, the sailors perceived that they approached some country; and fearing to be driven among rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern for the purpose of holding the vessel fast, and waited in terror for the coming day. But doubting all Paul’s assurances, and expecting each instant to be overwhelmed, in their despair they concerted a plot to save themselves, meaning, if possible, to escape in one of their boats, and

to leave the soldiers, the prisoners, and strangers to their fate in the vessel.

“Under the pretence of casting out another anchor they let down a boat into the sea, and were about to get into it, when Paul discovered their intention, and warned Julius that unless the people all staid by the ship, they could not be saved.

“Then the soldiers, seeing that they might confide in Paul, cut the ropes by which the boats were fastened and let it fall off, and so stopped the men who were on the point of descending into it.

“They were of course greatly disappointed and very angry, but Paul found means to appease them, and to maintain his influence over the whole crew.”

“I wonder how many persons there were on board,” said Emily.

“There were two hundred and seventy-six souls, all strangers and enemies to Paul, except the few Christians by whom he was accompanied; yet God enabled him to obtain ascendancy over them all.

“Seeing the whole ship’s company now almost deprived of reason from exhaustion, terror, and fatigue, he besought them to take

comfort and to fear nothing, again assuring them of their safety, and that not even a hair should fall from the head of any of them.

"He then entreated them to take some food, called for meat, and, reminding them that they had been fourteen days without sufficient nourishment, began himself to eat before them, which gave them so much encouragement, that they followed his advice, and soon regained, in some degree, their strength and cheerfulness."

CHAPTER VI.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STORM CONTINUED—
STRIKING ILLUSTRATION OF AN IMPORTANT
DOCTRINE.

"WHEN all had satisfied their hunger, so confident was Paul in the promises of his Saviour, that he made the men still further lighten the ship by throwing out the wheat that remained."

"Oh was not that very foolish, grand-mamma?" said Henry. "The people might have wanted food again, you know, and then what would he have done?"

"The ship had been laden with wheat, my child, which made it very heavy; and Paul probably permitted them to keep enough for their present wants; but however that may be, he knew that they were close to shore, and, as I have just said, he confided fully in his Saviour's promise. He was aware, also, of what perhaps you do not know, that the less heavily

a ship is laden, the more unlikely it will be to sink, or to become locked among the rocks of a dangerous coast.

"The day was beginning to dawn, and the crew now plainly discovered some unknown land, and after a time perceived a certain creek with a little strand around it, into which they resolved, if possible, to work the ship, although the sea ran mountains high between them and the shore."

"Grandmamma," said Henry, "if Paul really believed that God would preserve them, I think he was very foolish to let them take so much trouble about the working the ship, or trying to take care of themselves. God, he said, had sent to tell him that he would save all that were in the ship. Now, I do not like Paul as well as I did at first, for he declared that he believed what the angel told him, and yet it is plain that he did not believe it."

Mrs. T. laid down the manuscript until this remark should be answered.

The two girls stared at each other in admiration of the acuteness of the observation, and each looked at her parent in a sort of bewildered surprise as if some error had been dis-

covered, which greatly lessened the authority of the Bible in their eyes.

An undefined hope rushed into Mary's heart, that some share of discredit would now be attached to that book, which she had often fancied had commanded her to keep a very unnecessary, or, at least, a very disagreeable watch over herself, and her youthful cheek suddenly became flushed with the brightest hue, as she exclaimed—

"Really, Henry has made a very sensible observation for a little boy like him ; I wonder it never struck any of us until now."

"I am surprised that no one ever thought of it before," said her companion.

"It has been thought of and said a hundred times before, but always by the unthinking, the ignorant, or the childish," said Mrs. T.

Henry's countenance fell ; for the commendation he had received made him fancy he had said something very shrewd and clever.

"I am, however, pleased with your remark, my boy," said Mrs. C., kissing his cheek ; "it shows as much attention and reflection as could be expected from your age. But let us rest a little ; we have been reading some time,

and I should not dislike a little stroll in the garden ; and you, children, if Mrs. T. will allow it, will not object, I dare say, to amuse yourselves for half an hour in the strawberry-beds. We may then, if we are all so inclined, finish the history of Paul after tea."

" Oh thank you, grandmamma ! that will be so nice ; but will you really let us go into the garden ? You know the gardener has put grass-snakes* all about it to keep away the thieves. I think you forget, that both you and Mrs. T. wished us not to venture in until Alice had got the fruit she wanted for preserving, and until the snakes were taken away."

" I did forget it, my love ; but since I have said I would take you, I must keep my word, and I will engage to preserve you from any injury."

" Thank you, dear grandmamma ; you always keep your word, let what will happen. Paul might have been very certain of all your promises ; I am sure I always feel quite certain of them."

As Henry spoke, he tied the strings of his shoes tighter, declaring they were such a fine

* A kind of trap, designed to keep intruders out of gardens, orchards, and pleasure-grounds.

strong pair, that a snake could never get through the sole, even if he should tread quite hard on one. He then took down his hat, and hastened out of the summer-house.

"Why do you run off in such haste, my love; had you not better sit down quietly where you are?" said Mrs. C.

"Why, grandmamma," said Henry, stopping short in surprise, "are you not going to take us to the garden?"

"Yes; but if you are so sure of my taking you, why do you take the trouble of running there yourself. I promised to take you there, did I not? Now, I do not like little Henry so well as I did before, for he said he believed my promise, and yet it appears he does not believe it."

"Oh, grandmamma! you said you would take me to the garden, but I know you meant that I should walk there; you did not promise to carry me," continued he, laughing; "you would not let anybody carry me where I can go myself."

"Then you are quite sure that you can go to the garden by yourself, Henry?"

"Yes, grandmamma, quite sure."

"And why are you now able to go? You

would not, I think, have said so half an hour ago."

"No, grandmamma, I should not, because I had no key, and you had not then given me leave. But now Mrs. T. is bringing the key, and has promised to open the gate and let me in; so I have nothing to do but to keep my steps clear from the snakes, and to run away."

"Suppose I had not the key, might you not climb over the wall?" said Mrs. T.

"No, I tried that twenty times when I was here before; not to get the fruit, grandmamma; it was in winter, grandmamma, when the gates were open, and the fruit was all gone; but I never could manage it, the wall is so straight and high. Yet I can climb and leap pretty well," added Henry, "the gardener told me so:" and as he spoke, he swung his arms, preparing for a leap. His intention was to jump off the grass on something which he took to be a stone at the other side of a sunk fence that lay along the path, by which they were walking to the garden.

His grandmother cast her eye on the spot, and had just time, as he rose in the leap, to seize the skirt of his coat, and give him a sud-

den jerk, which made him tumble head foremost into the fence.

He scrambled up as he best could, covered over with mud, one hand very much hurt, and his good-humoured face trying to keep back a look of pain and mortification, while he cast an inquiring glance at his aged relative, to know why she had played him such a trick.

"You had nearly made my promise useless to you, my darling boy," said she, kissing his ruddy cheek, while her own grew pale with terror. "Had I not been in the habit of watching and trying to guard you from dangers which you do not yourself see, you would have leaped upon that man-trap, which you called a stone, and might have been either killed or disabled from ever walking again."

Mrs. T. and the girls shuddered at the thought of Henry's danger, and they all pursued their way to the garden, forgetful for the present of the strawberries and of every thing else, but their anxiety to have the gardener chid for having such a shocking implement of destruction in the grounds without permission.

The man was called, the snakes all carefully removed, and the fallen hero's clothes well scraped from the mud which covered

them : but the accident had thrown the whole party into a reflecting humour, and even Henry, "Madcap Henry," as he was called, commenced his attack upon the strawberries in silence. At length, as they approached the garden wall, he exclaimed, "Now, girls, look at that tremendous wall, so smooth, so high—nobody in the world, I think, could climb it."

"Not without a ladder and great assistance," said Mrs. C.; "and no seaman in the world, Henry, could have got a ship through that tremendous storm of which we have been reading, without some powerful means of help, some mighty hand and stretched-out arm to lead them on. A watchful Providence must have been their guide, guarding them past the rocks, and carrying them over shoals which they had not power, themselves, to perceive or avoid."

"Just as you guarded me from the man-trap, which I did not perceive," interrupted Henry. "But why, grandmamma, did you bid me sit down, and not come with you to the garden ? I know you had some meaning in that, but I do not quite understand you ; and I have been puzzling to find it out this long time."

"I wished to make you perceive that Paul understood the meaning of God's promise to him, and relied upon it just in the same way that you relied upon my promise to you, when I said I would take you to the garden. You fully understood that I was not to carry you ; I was only to give you leave to open the door, and to make a way for you to enter : you were still to walk there ; and had you sat down and refused to go, my promise would have been rendered useless to you, but it would not have been broken. Its meaning was, I will take you where you cannot go without my help : to me will be due all the merit of your entrance ; but unless you do your part and walk, you cannot benefit by my help. In this manner God said that he had given Paul the lives of all those who sailed with him, and that not a hair should fall from the head of any of them. Yet the apostle knew that while his heavenly Father watched over them, and guarded them past those countless dangers from which they could not preserve themselves, he only meant to guide them in the way, to open a door of escape, and give them leave to enter ; to prepare a haven of safety, to which they were to work their own passage. Had they refused to

manage the ship according to the principles of reason ; had they stopped its course, or madly thrown themselves into the foaming deep, as some of them were near to do, they would have made the promise useless to themselves, but no tittle of it on the part of the Almighty would have been broken. The plain and understood condition was, Except you abide in the ship, doing your duty in it and by it, you cannot be saved."

Mary had spoken but little since the conversation on this subject arose ; she now, however, stole to her mother's side, rejoicing that the authenticity of that book in which she sincerely delighted was again made clear to her understanding. "There was no error in the Bible then, and Paul was right after all !" she whispered ; her countenance the while abashed and subdued from a recollection of her late hasty decision and censurable feelings.

"There never was, my love, and never will be error discovered in that holy book ; the circumstance which has struck you all in that light was related probably for the express purpose of teaching us all how to understand another of its divine promises."

"What is that, mamma ?"

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' How do you understand this promise, Agnes?"

Agnes hesitated.

"Can you explain it, Emily?"

Silence ensued.

"Try, Mary," said Mrs. C.; "I think you comprehend its meaning."

"I suppose," said Mary, "we ought to understand it just as Paul understood the promise to the ship's crew."

"Oh yes!" said Emily; "and now I recollect there was a fine explanation of it in papa's sermon last Sunday. He said it meant that though Christ is our guide to heaven, and has paid the price of our entrance there; though to him belongs the entire merit of our permission to enter, yet must we fulfil our duty, and still relying on his grace, go forward in a straight course of obedience to his laws; otherwise we shall not profit by that right of entrance which he has purchased for us by his blood."

"Quite right, my love; though our merciful Redeemer guards us by night and day from ills we know not how to see or shun; though ne purchased with his own blood the leave for

our admission into heaven ; and though with anxious love he holds the door wide open for our entrance, yet still he requires us to keep alive within our hearts the wish to enter which he has kindled, and calls upon us to arise and walk ; to use the power of entering which he has given, lest we fall short of his salvation."

" Yes !" said Mrs. T. ; " he still requires us to work our passage through life, even with fear and trembling ; but he encourages all by the assurance that he will work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure : he still says to us as he said to the mariners, ' Except you abide in the ship (that is, unless you continue in my laws, adhere to my directions, and hold fast your confidence in my strength), you cannot be saved.' "

" Were we to sit down idly, Henry, expecting to be carried into heaven," said Mrs. C., " and to refuse to walk through the open door : or did we madly leap into the traps which Satan lays open in the path of all, though duly warned against their danger, then the promise of salvation would, through our own folly, become useless to us ; but no part of it would be broken."

"Dear Mrs. C.," said Mary, "your book has helped to make this a delightful Sunday evening; and has caused all this pleasant conversation, which I am so happy to have heard: it has made some things quite plain to me which I never understood before."

"Would to God that all my young friends were equally anxious to have the truth made plain to them!" said Mrs. C., heavily sighing. "But he will grant me that prayer in his own time."

CHAPTER VII.

ACCOUNT OF THE SHIPWRECK CONTINUED—
PAUL LANDS AT MALTA—OCCURRENCES ON
THAT ISLAND.

THE party having returned to the garden, and tea being ended, the young people begged that the account of Paul's shipwreck might be continued; and Mrs. C. now returned to the manuscript.

“ You had just brought them within sight of a little creek, with a sandy shore all round it: were they able to work the ship in ? ” said Henry. “ That must have been a nice place for them.”

“ They did, indeed, succeed in working themselves in ; but it was over a sea where two tides met ; and so great was the fury of the waves, that the stern of the vessel was torn away, and the fore part driven fast into the sand.”

“ If she had been still heavily laden, I sup-

pose she would have sunk between the tides," said Mary; "or else have come with such force against the shore, that she would have been knocked entirely to pieces."

"Then must the crew, who now held by her masts and rigging for safety, have been swallowed up in the deep," said Mrs. C. "But while clinging there, they were now able to consult together as to the most practicable method of getting to the shore."

"Oh!" said Henry, "how much obliged they must have felt to Paul!"

"Some of them had not virtue enough to think of being obliged either to him or to the God who had so graciously preserved them," continued Mrs. C. "The very first thing the Roman soldiers proposed was to kill Paul and all the other prisoners, lest they should be able to swim first to land, and so make their escape."

"O the wicked creatures," cried Henry, starting up with indignation. "Now, was I not right to say I hated the Romans?"

"You need not be angry with them all, my boy, because some have merited your disapprobation; and there is no occasion for hatred at all. You may at least, I am sure, feel satis-

fied with the conduct of one person on the present occasion. Julius, the captain of the Roman legion, would not consent to this barbarous proposal; but ordered that the soldiers, who were good swimmers, should go to shore first; that they should remain there ready to fulfil their duty, and meet the prisoners as they landed. And when this command was obeyed, then Julius and the rest of the crew—some swimming and some on boards, or rafts, or broken pieces of the ship—threw themselves into the water, and thus all got safe to land."

"Well, certainly God did keep his promise faithfully," said Mary. "Now, let us hear what became of these poor shipwrecked mariners, now they were safe on shore."

It was, however, resolved to keep that part of the history for another occasion: and when the same party were assembled the next Sunday evening, the manuscript was again produced.

"Grandmamma," said Henry, as they all took their seats around her chair, "I have found out from the Bible itself, that it was on the island of Malta the shipwrecked mariners, as Mary called them, were cast."

"I have no doubt it was, Henry; and that very little creek, with the sandy shore round it, has, I believe, been often trod by one whom you and I have dearly loved."

"Oh, dear grandmamma, I suppose so indeed," said Emily, tears springing to her eyes as some painful recollection seemed to cross her mind. "I did not think of that before. Oh, how much I wish we had been all there, to have walked along that lonely beach with him, and tried to give him comfort in his sorrow."

"I can scarcely help joining in the wish," said Mrs. C., struggling to keep back the sudden inroads of a grief which, still but half-subdued, and springing from one of the saddest trials of her life, was ever ready to overwhelm her mind, if left for a moment without the usual guard. "It was a vain wish, my child," said she, after a moment's effort, and with perfect composure. "There was One with him who was a better comforter than any here could have been; One who, in his boundless mercy, took him where sorrow could not reach him more. I love to recollect many of the comfortable passages in his letters, some of which arose out of the traces of Paul's shipwreck and residence on the island;

I love to reflect upon the strong desire his letters evinced to follow in the footsteps of the apostle, to emulate the example of his faith, his confidence, his patience, and subdued obedience to his heavenly Father's will. On that same spot they both encountered suffering and sorrow; and now they dwell together, I trust, in a land of righteousness and joy."

"But, grandmamma," said Henry, wiping away a tear which filled even his young eye and evidently wishing to lead his parent's thoughts to other subjects, "did Paul suffer any great misfortunes while he was on the island?"

"We know of none," said she, resuming her narrative, "but such as arose from his being detained a prisoner, and regarded as a criminal who was liable to be put to death. The people of the island, however, treated him and the whole crew with great humanity, affording them every accommodation in their power. At their first landing, they kindled large fires for them, because of the continued rain and cold; and Paul, ever active and unwearied in showing kindness, evinced his sense of their attention by assisting them to collect the fuel. He had just thrown on a

handful of sticks, when a viper, roused by the heat, sprang from the wood and fastened on his hand. Immediately the superstitious and ignorant, but well-minded people imagined that he was some dreadful sinner, perhaps a murderer, who, though escaped from all the perils of the storm, was yet pursued by divine justice, and not permitted to live.

"The most certain and speedy destroyer of human life known among them was, perhaps, the reptile which they saw hanging on the apostle's hand. It generally does its work of death in a few minutes; and they waited in solemn silence until they should see the culprit fall down dead before them. But He who had been his Saviour at Damascus, and through all the perils of his life, was with him still. The reptile fell harmless; its venom was prevented from entering his blood, and Paul was enabled to shake it off into the fire without feeling the slightest injury: thus showing, in one strong instance, the fulfilment of the promise made to the apostles, that 'they should speak with new tongues, should take up serpents; and if they drank any deadly thing, it should not hurt them; that they shall lay hands on the sick, and they

shall recover ;' every other part of which had been fulfilled before. Still, however, the beholders, who knew nothing of this promise, expected to see him fall ; but when at last they were convinced that no harm had happened to him, they changed their opinion, and declared that he must be a god.

" Not far from that part of the shore where the ship's crew landed there lived a man of great riches and authority, called Publius ; he was governor of the island, and was bound to see that all strangers who came there should be protected. He, however, went further than the mere line of duty directed ; for he took care of the whole company, maintaining them with the utmost kindness at his own cost. He was a good man, and, like all who are so, was a dutiful and affectionate son ; and it happened that he was at that present moment in great affliction for a beloved father, who lay at the point of death. Paul, having discovered his sorrow, begged leave to see the sufferer ; and after having prayed to his almighty Guide, obtained power to heal the sick man simply by laying his hands upon him. You can better conceive than I can tell the joy of Publius at having his father's life pie-

served, and seeing him restored to health. He loaded Paul with honours, and the whole crew with favours on his account. The inhabitants of more distant places in the island, hearing of the miracle, brought those who were sick among them to Paul, and he healed them all; insomuch that the people perceived to a certainty that the Divine power rested with him; they therefore readily believed whatever he taught; and although it is not mentioned in the Bible, yet common history relates that Paul made many converts and established a church in this place, over which he appointed Publius to preside. This man, it is said, remained to the last so steady to the faith, that he was crowned with martyrdom at Athens."

"But I suppose all that cannot be true, grandmamma, or it would have been mentioned in the Bible," said Henry.

At this moment Mrs. C. took off her spectacles, and looked from the summer-house door, as if she expected some one to enter.

"What do you see, grandmamma?" said Henry eagerly. "Is papa coming?"

"No, my love; it was a female I was looking for."

"A female!" cried he. "Do you mean a lady, grandmamma? And is it any one we love?"

"I thought, perhaps, that Eve might walk in and drink tea with us this evening."

"Dear grandmamma," said Henry, staring in the utmost astonishment, and then bursting into a violent fit of laughter, "how funny you are!" and he danced about the arbour, almost screaming with delight at the idea of seeing Eve walk in. "Oh! I do wish she would come, that we might see what kind of a lady she would seem, and what kind of clothes she would wear now."

Mary, half-shocked, entreated him to hold his tongue.

"But what do you mean, grandmamma?" he continued, again sitting down by her side; "you do so puzzle me sometimes, I cannot find out what you intend."

"Why, history says that Eve died as well as Adam, but it cannot be true, for it certainly is not told in the Bible; therefore I began to hope she might walk in, and let us all satisfy our curiosity as to what the first woman was like."

"Oh! I see what you mean, grandmamma;

well, I really did think that every thing which is true was told in the Bible."

"Just take two words out of the middle of your sentence, Henry, and tack them to the end of it," said Mary, "and then I think it will sound much better sense."

"But I think it sounds very good sense as it is, Miss Mary," said he, colouring from previous soreness occasioned by similar corrections, at this amendment of his phrase.

"But would it not sound a little better," said Mrs. C., "as your cousin proposes?—*I really did think that every thing which is told in the Bible was true.* If every thing true were told in Scripture, then, to use its own figurative language, 'I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.' But there is nothing told, however true, unless it be to answer some wise and necessary purpose. There is not one word said to gratify idle curiosity, or to increase mere worldly knowledge. You may therefore very safely believe, that Paul's preaching was not thrown away at Malta, and that Publius and many of the Maltese became good Christians, although the Bible says not one word about the matter."

Mrs. C. was going on with her story, when a preparatory hem from Emily indicated that some unwilling subject was slowly finding its way to her lips.

At length it came.—“Grandmamma,” said she, “a person once told me that the words you have just repeated,—‘The world itself could not contain the books that should be written,’ &c. &c., were nonsense. Do you think they are so?”

“Before I reply, let me ask you, my child, if you took the person’s word for it, and believed that they were so?”

“I did not exactly believe they were nonsense,” said Emily, blushing; “but I felt a little sorry that while she was repeating them they did not appear more like good sense.”

“The person must have been an excellent critic, I should think, and very clever,” said Mrs. C.

“Yes, grandmamma, she is indeed very clever.”

“And very anxious to discover faults in the Bible, is she not?”

“I do not know, grandmamma.”

“Those who are not so, my child, would never try to persuade themselves that the

words you have just mentioned were nonsense."

"But this person uses such beautiful language herself, that the least fault would naturally strike her."

"Her general manner of expressing herself is indeed, my love, very attractive, for I suspect who the person is : that could not, however, make her discover faults which do not exist. Her language is richly stored with the expressive idiom of her country, and therefore very powerful and easy to be understood by her compatriots ; and this should make her more quick than others at comprehending the idiomatic language of the Bible, which is so admirably fitted to rouse reflection and attention in the thoughtless."

"Oh, indeed !" said Agnes, "her own language is rousing enough ; I remember how she made you start one day when you had forgotten her orders in something she was teaching you to draw. 'What have we here?' cried she: 'Oh, all ye powers of painting ! behold the taste and talent displayed in colouring the pale petals of a primrose with yellow ochre ! Did any eye ever see so great a donkey ? Why, child, if I had done this, I should

have felt as if the whole world was blushing for my stupidity.'"

"How cross that was!" said Henry; "Emily is not half so great a donkey as she is herself; for I know whom you mean very well, and I heard papa once say, she had not half an ounce of common sense in her whole head. The world may blush for her if it likes, but it will never blush for any thing about my own pigeon-pet sister," he added, throwing his arms about her neck, and kissing her violently.

"Stop, stop, dear Henry!" cried Emily, "you will certainly choke me. I do not require any sort of comfort; I assure you I was not in the least offended or annoyed by the lady. I was accustomed to her manner of speaking, and knew quite well what she meant."

"And what did she mean, my love?" said Mrs. C.

"Merely to tell me that I had done a dreadfully stupid thing, and that was very true."

"There is no denying that," said her grandmother; "but you have at present proved yourself less stupid than this very clever lady."

"How?" cried Henry: "Oh, I hope Emily has proved herself more clever than the clever lady! But tell me how."

"Why, she understood the lady when she used a strong figure of speech, but the lady could not understand St. John when, in the fervour of affection for his divine Master, he expressed himself after the same manner. I think, Henry, even you might without much difficulty understand his meaning."

"Yes, and so I think I do, grandmamma; I am sure St. John only meant to tell how very, very many, what a great number of things his Master had done. Am I right, grandmamma?"

"Quite right."

"Oh, joy! joy!—then, Emily, both you and I are more clever than the clever lady."

"I never yet saw a caviller at the Bible whose objections could not be refuted even by the simple reasonings of a child. But if we do not return to our poor friend Paul, we shall be obliged to leave him until this day week, and we have already kept him much too long in Malta. We had better, therefore, proceed with his history."

CHAPTER VIII.

PAUL'S SUBSEQUENT TRAVELS, LABOURS,
AND DEATH.

"HAVING spent three months on the island, the ship's crew again set sail for Italy, and landing, after various stops, at Puteoli, Paul and the other prisoners, escorted by Julius, proceeded on their journey to Rome. The Christians of that place had heard of his approach, and came to meet him, some thirty, some fifty miles' distance from the town. Their joy was great to see him; and his meeting them was augmented by finding that they at present enjoyed so much more liberty, and comparative happiness than he had known them to do before. They conducted him with a sort of triumph into the city, where, on their arrival, the other prisoners were shut up in the public jail, while Paul, at the request of Julius, now his steady friend, obtained leave to stay in a private house, guarded only by one soldier.

“ The first act of Paul after he was settled in this manner, was to summon the heads of the Jewish consistory, and acquaint them with the cause and manner of his coming. He informed them, that although he had been guilty of no violation either of the law or the religion of his country, yet his brethren, after various attempts to destroy him, had at length delivered him up into the hands of the Roman governors, who, finding that he was innocent of every crime, would have acquitted him at once, but that, from the obstinacy of the Jews in persecuting him, he was forced to appeal to Cesar.

“ He did not make this appeal, he said, with the intention of complaining against his brethren, but merely to get his own character vindicated from the false charges brought against him. He had, therefore, now sent for them to declare in their presence, that the only cause why he was in bonds was his being a Christian, and because he as such asserted the truth of the resurrection of Christ; ‘and yet,’ said he, in his own simple style of reasoning, ‘the same is the hope of all true Israelites.’

“ His brethren then asked to be somewhat

better informed as to the faith he professed, asserting that it was everywhere spoken against ; and Paul, happy to have so good an opportunity of declaring the truth, appointed a day for complying with their request. At this assembly he explained to them in full the doctrines of his religion, its systematic connexion and indissoluble union with their own ; pointed out in Scripture all the promises and predictions which had now been so clearly fulfilled, or which were now before their own eyes in the progress of fulfilment.

“ Some were converted by his preaching, but the greater part, to Paul’s sorrow, refused to believe. They always imagined that the Messiah was to be an earthly prince, who should bring their nation to great credit and honour, and they would not give up the idea, or consent to acknowledge any other ruler.

“ Paul was, in consequence, obliged to apprize them, that since they rejected the hope of a better life and all the glad tidings which the gospel offered them, he must henceforward leave them and bestow his best attentions and exertions on the Gentiles.

“ Soon after this, he was called to his first public examination before the emperor ; and

though upon this trying occasion some friends deserted him, being afraid to appear in his defence, and though many enemies, both Jews and Romans, surrounded him, all ready to approve of any decree of his wicked and unreasonable judge, yet God stood his friend, and by his all-sufficient strength frustrated their attempts against his life, and delivered him in safety from their hands.

“After two years’ confinement at Rome, during which time he wrote many of his letters to the Christian churches, his liberty was restored, and he set out on new missions over the world. He now travelled in every direction, preached both in the east and in the west, and spread the gospel over more than half the surface of the globe. It is thought, and with much appearance of reason, that the Isles of the West into which he introduced the gospel, as asserted by the most ancient writers, were our own little British Isles : and every British heart, I think, feels pleasure in the assertion.”

“Oh ! how glad I am that Paul was in Ireland, as well as in that nasty little Malta. Are you sure it is true, grandmamma ? I hope it is quite certain.”

"I cannot vouch for its certainty, Henry, as there are very few written, though several oral traditions on the subject. Many people, however, think that the wise and good person who was so useful to Ireland, and who is still almost worshipped by the natives under the name of *St. Patrick*, was no other than St. Paul."

"Oh how glad I am that anybody thinks it!" said Henry; "I am resolved to believe it, and I shall now always like St. Patrick's day* better than I ever did, and will never pass it without wearing a shamrock."

"Grandmamma," said Emily, "I think our little green island appears to have been peculiarly favoured by Providence."

"Most persons, my love, think exactly the same of their native country, for God is good to every land. But, in truth, the British Isles seem to have been favoured in some respects above most others, particularly in being set apart by God's peculiar providence as the stronghold of Christianity in its most pure and apostolic form. I wish you to be aware, my children, that among all the other coun-

* The 17th of March.

tries of the world no church has ever been discovered so purely and entirely founded on the word of God as that established here, and now disseminated widely over the earth."

"And how, grandmamma, does it happen to be more pure than others?"

"Because those by whom it was first established had sense enough, guided by Almighty Wisdom, to cast away the errors and encroachments of human invention, and to reject all tradition, but not to discard any thing merely because it had been sanctioned by the corrupt church from which they separated. Looking only to the written word of God for their guidance; and, where it was necessary, to seek assistance as to the interpretation of any of its doctrines or precepts, inquiring into the practices and opinions of the earliest and purest times, they built their fair and spotless fabric on *that* foundation which never can be shaken."

"How happy it seems that nothing was left to tradition, and that enough was written in the Bible to direct them in forming their new church on the same model as those which had been established by the apostles."

"Yes, Mary, that was indeed a great and

extraordinary blessing, to be attributed only to God's special and particular providence. He caused the servants whom he had chosen for the work, to write exactly what he saw expedient for his purpose, neither more nor less."

"How many persons were employed in writing the New Testament, grandmamma?"

"There were nine persons, Henry; and we should with gratitude reflect on the astonishing circumstance of their all agreeing in the same statement of facts and doctrines, although they wrote in different places, and at different times from each other. Paul had a principal share in the work, and was made an instrument of lasting and most extensive good to mankind, being chosen to write fourteen epistles. His visits and preaching would soon have been forgotten by a thoughtless and ungrateful world; the reports or traditions of them might have been corrupted or lost, but his written words will never fail."

"It is sad to think that even St. Paul, who did so much good, should be forgotten," said Mary.

"It is still more sad, my child, to think that even our blessed Saviour, by whom alone we may have life, might have been equally for-

gotten, but for that gospel through which we are enabled to look back on him, to retrace his footsteps through the world, and to refresh our memory as to all he did and suffered for us. Here, in this blessed book, we have also such strong examples of how others loved and remembered him, as ought to put our feeble services and fainter recollections to the blush."

"I wish we knew which of all his servants remembered him best," said Henry.

"It would be a useless piece of knowledge, since we are certain that they each remembered him to their latest breath. It is, however, known, that among them all, no one was more faithfully or affectionately devoted to his service than the apostle whose history we have been recording, and whose life now draws near to its close."

"Oh! shall we hear nothing more about his coming to Ireland?"

"No, Henry; I have said it is not fully ascertained whether he ever came or not; nor can his footsteps be traced with any certainty from the time of his quitting Rome after his imprisonment, until his return there again in the ninth year of Nero's reign. You may remember in Roman history, that this monster

set fire to his own metropolis, that he might enjoy the sight of human suffering, and also have an opportunity of charging the Christians with the crime. The people, though well aware that the charge was false, felt glad of any pretext for persecuting a sect which they abhorred : and nothing could be more dreadful than the cruelties now inflicted on their victims. Paul, with many hundred fellow-sufferers, was thrown into prison, and only taken thence to be led to execution. Baronius tells us, that in the church of St. Mary, beyond the bridge in Rome, the pillars are yet standing to which he was bound, where he was barbarously scourged, before he was taken from the town. He was marched into the country, three miles from Rome, to a place called the Aquæ-Salviæ : and on the way, by the force of his example and preaching, he made such a deep impression on the soldiers by whom he was surrounded, that three of them became his converts ; and a few days after, on their refusing to renounce the Christian faith, they were also put to death, at the inhuman emperor's command.

“Arrived at the place of execution, a block was prepared for beheading Paul, since, as a

Roman, he could not be deprived of life in any more dishonourable manner ; and, after a few moments of solemn preparation, he stretched his exhausted frame upon the earth, and cheerfully laid down his head, while the practised executioner stood ready to sever it from his body. The stroke fell—a single blow was sufficient—his sufferings were not prolonged—his death was instantaneous : in a moment his ransomed spirit mounted into realms of joy, to reap a rich reward, and dwell for ever in the presence of his God.

“ Although we have already dwelt so long upon the history of St. Paul, I think you will all desire to know whatever can be learned from authentic authors of his character and personal appearance. He was, says Stackhouse, a laborious inquirer into truth, low, and of slender stature ; his complexion was fair, and his head small, with thick hair and beard ; his countenance grave, his nose long and gracefully formed, and his eyes carrying great beauty and sweetness. As his make was not athletic, so neither was his constitution strong : of this, however, he never complained. His patience under every varied kind of trial was indeed remarkable. He seems to have

possessed a soul steeled with constancy and resolution, whose courage was impenetrable, and over which no temptation, either from the hopes or fears of this life, could have the slightest control. He had a clear and sound judgment, a ready and retentive memory ; his temperance was great, and his kindness and charity were so admirable, as to make him frequently toil with his own hands for the relief of the distressed."

"How manly and courageous he seems to have been," said Henry, after a little reflection : "I think he was quite as clever as he was good."

"And yet, Henry, when you are grown a man, and have gone out into life, you will hear the thoughtless and the wicked of the world say, that it is only weak or silly people who are followers of Christ. Do not forget, then, that we have here a man of courageous character, sound judgment and strong sense, devoting his whole life to the service of the gospel. You see him travelling from clime to clime, enduring every species of fatigue, mortification, and hardship, sacrificing all the early habits and long-indulged pleasures of his life, and persisting in his newly-adopted

course unchanged by scoffs or ridicule, unsubdued by want and suffering, undisturbed by ingratitude, and undismayed by death.

“Such, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, was Paul, the once cruel and implacable Saul of Tarsus. And, with this example before him, let not any penitent sinner, blessed as we all are with a promise of the same assistance, despair of amendment, or doubt of receiving pardon.

“We have now only to add, that he was buried two miles from Rome, in the *Via Ostiensis*, and that over his grave was erected by Constantine the Great a stately church, adorned with a hundred columns of the most beautiful workmanship,—the whole edifice being ornamented in the most costly and magnificent manner.”

“But what good did that do to poor Saul of Tarsus?” said Henry.

“What good, you should rather say, would it do to happy Saul? None, my child, it is true; but it did good to others: it stood a lasting monument of his conversion, and seemed to say to all who entered,—‘Think of the lowly tent-maker, the humbled, the converted, and penitent Saul of Tarsus. Think

of his change of heart, his faith, his prayers, his zeal, his fervent charity. Recollect his constancy in suffering, his patient endurance even unto the end. O think of these things, and be ye, one and all, like-minded with him.' Yes, my boy, the last crumbling stone that remains in that edifice should say to you and to each rational creature that approaches it,— 'Remember that here lies, honoured and revered, the remains of one who, having been dead in trespasses and sin, was yet raised, by Christ our Lord, to life eternal. Enter, and seek in prayer the same blessing. He obtained it by repentance and faith. Do like him ; fight the good fight of faith, run manfully the race set before you, and doubt not, but earnestly believe, that you shall obtain the same reward, and be admitted to share with him in joys unspeakable and full of glory.'

As the party arose at the conclusion of the evening, to retire to their respective apartments, Mary's eyes became filled with tears at the recollection that she was to lose her cousins in the morning, and that their studies, which they so greatly enjoyed together, and especially their Sunday reading, must now for

a long time be pursued by them separately. The regret was indeed mutual, but each endeavoured to comfort the other with a hope of meeting in the spring, when Mrs. T. promised to take her daughter on a visit to C—— Hall. Here it was expected that all their accustomed enjoyments would be renewed, among which was reckoned the completion of Mrs. C.'s first series of lives. And each of the girls agreed to try who should obtain, during the period of their separation, the nicest collection of books to add to their juvenile library.

CHAPTER IX.

A HAPPY FAMILY GROUP—THE WISDOM OF GOD IN THE INSTITUTION OF THE SABBATH.

ON the first Sunday evening after their return home, Mrs. C., Emily, and Henry met once more in their usual haunt, the waterfall arbour, to enjoy an hour's retirement within its pleasant shade. The young people had just returned from a long walk, having been to visit a pensioner, whom, to their great delight, they found recovered from a dangerous illness with which she had been attacked during their absence.

They came back, therefore, in high spirits, describing to Mrs. C. the happiness of the good old woman's family at her restoration. Panting with fatigue and pleasure, they all sat down, well disposed to enjoy the quiet rest and refreshing coolness which awaited them in their favourite retreat.

"How delightful it is to rest when one **is** really tired!" exclaimed Emily.

"How cool and comfortable you appear, dear grandmamma, while we are panting for breath and gasping with heat," said Henry, as they threw themselves upon their seats; "but now do tell me if you have been sitting here in this solitary arbour, quite alone, ever since we left you?"

"I have been sitting here ever since, I acknowledge, but neither solitary nor alone. I have had several pleasant visitors, Henry, since you have been with me."

"O who were they, grandmamma? I wish I had staid at home to have seen them. I do so like pleasant visitors!" cried he, starting to her side, forgetful of his fatigue.

"They probably would not have pleased you, my child; so much as they did me; for the visitors I speak of were my own thoughts: and I believe you must wait till you are as old as I am before you can expect to find such companions equally pleasant."

"Grandmamma," said he, after some moments' reflection, "I should like to hear what sort of thoughts they were that seemed to you

such pleasant companions. I wonder whether I should think them pleasant too."

" Well then, my love, just as you entered I was indulging pretty much the same thought as that which your sister at the moment expressed."

" What—that it is very delightful to rest when one is tired! Well, I am sure I can think that too!"

" I had been watching your poor friend Drudger, the miller's horse, enjoying the respite which he is allowed on this day from his labour at the wheel, and lying at rest among the farmer's herd of cows. He was stretched upon the mossy sod, close by the river's bank, with his eyes half-closed, and was basking luxuriously in the sun. Like all the cattle around him, he seemed to know no want; or, I should rather say, his state of ease and comfort appeared to afford him positive happiness. While regarding them, I could not help reflecting how good that God must be who has made the dumb creatures of the earth with the capacity to feel pleasure, and who has provided so largely for their enjoyment. Then came another thought. Since God took care to form them for enjoyment, and graciously

provided such means of comfort even for the beasts that perish, will he not also be careful for us, his rational creatures, whom he has made to know and serve him? Will he not still more graciously supply our wants, and provide for our happiness, both here and in that future world where we can do nothing for ourselves? He has formed me, I said to myself, with the capability of loving him; has made me desire to live in his presence, and to enter into his rest. Unless, then, I swerve from the appointed path, and wilfully wander from his way, he will assuredly lead me also to refreshing pastures, beside fountains of living water, in his own eternal kingdom."

" Well, grandmamma, though you think me a silly boy sometimes, yet I can enjoy that thought very much, and think it a very pleasant one too; so pray go on, and tell me what you thought next."

" Why, I happened then to turn my eyes towards our poor old shepherd's cottage. I saw its owner, and you may still see him, sitting beneath that spreading oak, with his poor blind wife, as usual, close by his side; while six helpless grandchildren, for whose support, as well as hers, he toils incessantly through-

out the week, sported in childish happiness around them.

“ Their widowed mother, still bowed down by sorrow and worn with constant labour, sat at the other side, resting her head upon her father’s shoulder. A book was in her hand, which I supposed to be the Bible, and from which she appeared sometimes to read aloud. At intervals, however, she laid it down, as she and the old man gazed upon the youthful group, who at one moment sat at their feet listening to its contents, or at others sported at some distance, while, probably, their mother read those parts to which she thought it needless to call their attention.

“ Having so often observed the same party at work in the neighbouring factory, the little children toiling to perform their daily allotted task, and the father and daughter unceasingly at labour to provide a supply of bread for all their wants, I could not but rejoice to see them now at rest ; nor could I fail to be struck with the kind and provident wisdom of Him who had ordained this cessation of labour once in every week, to let tired nature recruit and renovate in the enjoyment of leisure and repose. Then, again. I felt how sure it was that He

who thus, with fatherly compassion, watches over his creatures in this their appointed state of trial, will, with the same continued tenderness, preserve them, and provide for their enjoyment when present with him in the realms of everlasting life."

"Grandmamma, it certainly was very good of God to appoint a day of rest for poor people, and for beasts, and for all the world; but I wonder he did not leave everybody to choose his own Sabbath; then each person would have chosen the day when he was most tired, and when rest would be most pleasant and convenient to him."

"If you reflect a little, Henry, I fancy you will find God's way in this matter, as in all other things, wiser and better than your way, or that of any other being. Suppose, for a moment, that he had allowed all persons to choose their own weekly day of rest, what kind of a world should we have had to live in? Do you think it would have been very orderly?"

"How do you mean, grandmamma?"

"You expect Lucas to send you home your new suit of clothes to-morrow, do you not, preparatory to our visiting Sir Robert and Lady Onslow?"

“ Yes.”

“ Suppose, then, that Lucas were to choose to-morrow for his day of rest, and send you word you could not have the clothes ?”

“ Then I would take them from him, and send them off to Tom’s friend Mr. Plint, who happens to be a much better tailor, and never disappointed anybody.”

“ But the day might be his Sabbath also.”

“ Why, then, I must only wait for them till Friday.”

“ So far so good ! and Friday we will say was our appointed rest, and we could not stir from home, so that would answer very well. We would now suppose the clothes come, and all ready on that night ; you might therefore ring the bell, and tell the coachman to prepare for a long journey the next morning, and bid him have the carriage at the door as early as you please.”

“ And ‘t please you, sir,” said Emily, pretending to touch her hat, and speaking so like Thomas, the fat coachman, that Henry at first thought he was in the room. “ And ‘t please you, sir, I can’t go to-morrow ; it is to be my Sabbath, sir ; and being the last day of the week, sir, I can’t, on no account at all, sir,

postpone it. I assure you, sir, to be obliging to one person or other, I have put it off already, sir, and 't please you, to the very last moment."

"Indeed, then, Mr. Coachman, it would not please me at all," said Henry. "But how very cross it would be of them all to fix their Sab bath just on the days we wanted them."

"So everybody would think, and so everybody would say; and then, Henry, we should have a fine world of quarrelling, and disputing, and fighting, instead of spending our days in harmony, and peace, and preparation for another world, as God intended."

"Oh! indeed I see, grandmamma, that what I said was very foolish, and I will always believe again that whatever God does is wiser and better than any thing I could think of."

"If you feel persuaded of that truth, Henry, you will be sure to live satisfied and contented to the end of your existence. The belief that God cannot err, and that whatever he ordains must be right, is the true secret of happiness. Trust me, my boy, the volatile inhabitants of foreign countries, whom you have heard described as laughing and dancing through the whole of Sunday, and the thoughtless lovers

of pleasure in our native land, who pass through every day in the same giddy manner, never experience so delightful a sensation of happiness as those pious Christians who, obeying their Master's will, separate themselves from the vanities of life during that hallowed day, and who seek only for the pleasures which may be found in the enjoyments of their own family circle, in the service of their fellow-creatures, and in communion with their God."

"I wish," said Agnes, with deep reflection in her countenance, "I wish I had been accustomed from my infancy to observe Sundays as you all do here. If that had been the case, I should not now find it so difficult to remember the different things from which I ought to refrain throughout that day."

"No, my child, you would probably long ere this have learned to love and honour the day as you ought, and to feel a sort of allowable pride in knowing that you were making one in that countless host united over the earth, who, though the world has been in existence nearly six thousand years, still take delight in obeying an injunction given, we have the best reason to believe, at the creation, and are thus joined with their forefathers now

in heaven, who, by obedience to the same command, have handed down His name to future times.

"A day of rest kept holy in every quarter of the globe, when all faithful hearts are raised, as it were, at the same moment to heaven, and this great work brought about and continued since the foundation of the world merely by that first simple command, appears to me one of the most sublime, as well as one of the most beautiful events that can be conceived," said Mrs. C.

"It is certainly very beautiful in idea," said Agnes; "but—but—"

"But what, my love?"

"But yet I very often find it in reality very dull and disagreeable. My French governess used to laugh immoderately at the people of this country for thinking it necessary, as she said they did, to put on long grave faces once every week, and to carry them about from Saturday night until Monday morning. She declared she hated an English Sunday more than any thing in the world, and she used to ridicule everybody unmercifully for being so dull and stupid on that day."

"The restrictions of the Sabbath, few and

gentle as they are, will ever make it appear a dull and stupid day to those who do not love God, or wish to keep his commandments," said Mrs. C. "But whether it be dull or not, the Christian must obey his Maker's will. He must from its very commencement, if he be really a Christian, turn away his foot from following his own pleasure on that holy day. His own words, his own ways, his own pleasures are all tending to sin ; he must, therefore, restrain himself in them all, trying to preserve those about him, as far as he is able, from what is evil, and endeavouring to promote within himself and others every feeling that is pious, charitable, thankful, and contented. If you do this, my beloved children, in submission to your heavenly Father's will, and despise the scoffs of the world, however dull or stupid the day may at first appear, you may rely on his promised reward."

"What is that, grandmamma?" said Henry.

"A blessing from above, which will in time make the observance of the day delightful to you, and which will lead you onward in the path of virtue until you shall become, like Jacob, the favoured and happy servant of God."

"And is there such a promise in Scripture?" asked Agnes.

"Can any one present tell Agnes where such a promise is to be found?"

"I can," said Emily. "It is in the 58th chapter of Isaiah, and the last two verses. I taught it to Henry last Sunday."

"Then you may call on him to repeat it now," said Mrs. C.

"But may I punish either of the girls who cannot say it first, and put them down to the bottom of the class, the way you do the naughty little children at your school?" said Henry.

"I am sure, Henry, I ought to be put down," said Agnes, blushing deeply; "since I do not know even one word of any such promise."

"My dear girl, you deserve no blame in the matter," said Mrs. C. "Henry could not put you to the bottom of his class for not knowing what you have never been taught. Those who have learned it, and who pay no attention to the command, are they who merit punishment. Next Sunday evening I shall, however, expect that you too, my love, will be able to repeat the verses, and that you will try with Emily which can give Henry the best explanation of them."

The young people then requested to know which apostle's life they were to have for this evening's reading; and Mrs. C., having collected her papers, was preparing to answer the question, when Henry challenged his sister and cousin to guess what martyrdom she was about to commence. Henry, to set them the example, began immediately to name several persons of whom he remembered something in the Bible. The girls too were nothing loath: they also tried, but failing in their attempts, and Henry making them all laugh by guessing persons who never were either apostles or martyrs, the girls at length said it would be wiser to let their grandmother put the matter out of doubt, which she immediately did by commencing

CHAPTER X.

THE LIFE AND MARTYRDOM OF ANDREW
THE FISHER.

“ When brothers part for manhood’s race,
 What gift may not endearing prove,
To keep fond memory in her place,
 And certify a brother’s love ?

Whoe’er thou art wouldst grave thy name
 Deeply within a brother’s heart,
Look on this saint, and learn to frame
 Thy love-charm with true Christian art.

CHRISTIAN YEAR.

“ THE land of Palestine, before the birth of our blessed Saviour, was divided into three district provinces, Galilee, Judea, and Samaria. The first was highly favoured, even beyond the other two, for loveliness of country, fertility of soil, and salubrity of climate. ‘These advantages, however, so far from making its early inhabitants grateful and obedient to Him

who had bestowed on them so many blessings, rather led to a careless forgetfulness of his will.

“ After various punishments designed in mercy to remind them of their duty, and to bring them back into the paths of virtue, they were threatened with a dreadful vengeance unless they should repent and turn from their evil ways: and on their continued disobedience, their land was given up to the Assyrians, who were suffered to subdue it, and to treat them with such severity as their crimes deserved.

“ Then, when it was too late, they lamented their ingratitude and mourned for their sin; they cried unto the Lord in their distress, and poured out their prayer when his chastening was upon them. But though he heard and pitied their affliction, he knew it to be needful for them. The Assyrians were suffered to become their masters, and were made the instruments of their punishment.

“ Nevertheless, God was not forgetful of his children, although they had so long forgotten him. He could not indeed, without changing the course of events which his providence had ordered, and perhaps oppressing others who

were less guilty, alter the lot which they had brought upon themselves ; but he felt the most tender compassion for their affliction, and sent the prophet Isaiah, his chosen and faithful servant, to comfort them with a promise, that however poor or miserable their circumstances now might be, although they walked for the present in darkness and dwelt under oppression, yet they should not always be forgotten ; the Messiah should come to be their deliverer, and by his Spirit, doctrines, and teaching, should enlighten, comfort, and civilize their whole country.

* “Having been the first among the nations to share in the calamities brought on by the invasion of the Assyrians, they should be the first, Isaiah said, to enjoy the prerogative of their blessed Saviour’s appearance, and should have cause one day to sing with hymns of joy, ‘Behold, the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light ! they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.’”

“Grandmamma,” said Henry, hesitating from the fear that he was going to say something wrong, “I do not think such a promise would have given me much comfort ; it was

not, you know, to be fulfilled for such a long time."

"Those who are at the height of happiness, Henry, can judge very little what will give comfort to the miserable," said Mrs. C. "Though you seem to despise the promise, yet the Galileans, humbled and subdued by their sufferings, received it with joy. Perceiving from it that there was kindness in reserve for their children, they understood that they could not themselves be utterly forsaken, and believed that even for them, sinful as they had been, there was still mercy reserved in a better world. I, Henry, can very easily imagine the comfort which the Galileans must have received from the message of Isaiah. I, even at this moment, experience a consolation greatly resembling what they must have derived from it."

"What can that be, grandmamma?"

"I live, my child, in a country, and at a period, when the land I love and the faith I profess are subjected to severe trials. A host of the Assyrians, to punish our strange forgetfulness of God, have been permitted to assail our religion, threatening to lay it even with the dust. But we have the sur~~r~~ word

of promise that it shall not fall, since it is founded on the Rock of ages.

“The coming-in of various prophecies concerning its present state of trial and the final downfall of its enemies give me the most comfortable hope, that although I may probably see wars and troubles during my own short day of life, yet that God has a blessing in store for the days when I shall be at rest, and when you, my children, will, I trust, see peace and prosperity in your native land, and brotherly love and Christian fellowship among your countrymen. Such, too, I should hope, may have been the comfortable expectation of the Galileans, whom we must now, however, leave in their darkness and sorrow, and hasten forward to that moment when their glory should appear, and when the day-spring from on high should visit them.

“In the province of Galilee there is an expanse of water, called, in the time of our Saviour, the lake of Genesareth, which, besides adorning and refreshing the country, brought many blessings to the surrounding neighbourhood. It is in length one hundred furlongs, and in breadth forty. Its waters are pure and clear, sweet and wholesome: it is stored with

several kinds of fish, different from those of other seas, and its banks, generally speaking, are no less favoured than its waters. Perhaps one of the earliest settlements made upon its shore was a small bethsaida or fishing-house, which stood at the north-eastern extremity, just where the river Jordan falls into the lake. This shelter had been at first erected for the convenience of those who obtained their livelihood by fishing. But from a single house it had soon grown into a pleasant village, which retained the same name, and in time it became a famous and an honoured city, whose site will be respected while the world shall last.

"As fishing was the staple trade of the place, its inhabitants were of course chiefly composed of fishermen ; and among them was a man called Jona, remarkable for his having been blessed with two sons whom Providence had destined to distinguished honours, and who were highly spoken of for virtuous conduct, industry, and attachment to each other. They were brought up to the same trade with their father, and pursued his business until well advanced in life. At last, hearing a strange rumour that a person called John Baptist had appeared in Galilee, urging the

Jews to repentance and reformation of life, and declaring that the Messiah, whose descent had been so long foretold, was now really at hand, and was coming to dwell among them, the brothers felt desirous to learn if all that report had stated of this extraordinary person was true.

“Andrew, the youngest of the two, who could probably be best spared from their necessary avocations, immediately left his business and went into the adjoining wilderness, where he was told the holy man resided, to hear whatever could be learned on this momentous subject.

“He found the Baptist standing by the river Jordan, clothed in sackcloth, and having a leathern girdle about his loins. Careless of all the comforts and conveniences of life, he stood teaching and baptizing the multitude, intent only on preparing their minds to receive and obey the coming Saviour, declaring to them, as the prophet Isaiah had expressed it, ‘the acceptable year of the Lord, preparing his way, and making his path straight.’

“One day, while Andrew was standing by the Baptist, attending to his lectures on the river’s bank, a stranger of mild, dignified, and

holy appearance, drew nigh. On his approach, John immediately announced that this was He of whom he had been speaking, the Messiah whom they all so long desired to see, ‘the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.’

“On receiving this information, Andrew and another of John’s disciples watched the stranger as he passed by, and went after him at an humble distance. But he, knowing who it was that followed him, turned about, and mildly said to them, ‘What seek ye?’ Taken by surprise, and unprepared to give a direct answer, they replied to the question by asking another, ‘Master, where dwellest thou?’ Then Jesus kindly invited them to come with him and see. And they went and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him the whole day, conferring with him and receiving his instructions until their faith in his being the Messiah was fully confirmed.

“Thus persuaded, Andrew immediately hastened back to tell his family the joyful news; and meeting first with his beloved brother Simon, he exclaimed, ‘We have found the Messiah! the Christ!’ and, without loss of time, brought him to the place where he

had himself seen the Lord, that he also might have the advantage of seeing and conversing with him. Then both remained with him for a short season. Jesus did not, however, at that time think fit to desire their stay; but after a conference with Peter, which will be more properly related in that apostle's Life, he suffered the brothers to return home, where they continued to pursue their humble occupation, rejoicing that light had at last risen on their country, and that the yoke of bondage, of cruelty, and oppression was now to be removed. Yet they knew not exactly how this was to be brought about, and probably still expected, like the rest of their nation, that Christ would prove himself an earthly prince, a mighty warrior, who should lead them all to battle, and teach them to subdue their enemies by force of arms.

"In this uncertain state of expectation they remained for upwards of a year, when one day as the two brethren were casting their nets into the lake, Jesus drew nigh and came to them on the shore, speaking to them in these impressive words: 'Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.'"

"Grandmamma," said Henry, "do stop for a few minutes, and let me ask you one question. Why did Jesus Christ choose such very poor, mean persons to be his apostles and servants? I think, if I had been in his place, I should have chosen the cleverest, the wisest, and most learned people I could have found to preach my gospel; and you know he might have chosen any person he pleased. I wonder he did not do so."

"Had your or any other human wisdom been employed to manage the business, Henry, I am sure quite different measures would have been adopted. The best educated men, the greatest orators, and the most subtle arguers would certainly have been selected to reason with their stubborn fellow-creatures, and bring them to an acknowledgment of the truth."

"Yes, indeed, grandmamma, that is exactly what I should have done; and then, you know, they would immediately have silenced everybody, and been able to overcome even the philosophers and learned Rabbins, who were so fond of disputing and arguing with them. I wonder why such people were not chosen."

"I will tell you why, Henry. Our Saviour knew that in after-ages, when men would by

degrees forget the event of his descent, and all the wonderful circumstances of his residence on earth, doubters and cavillers would arise, who, growing tired of the restraints of religion, would say that those wise and learned persons had silenced everybody by subtlety of argument, and not by force of truth, and that they had taught the world a cunningly-devised fable of their own invention."

"Ah!" said Agnes, "many simple and well-intentioned persons might then have been induced to credit what they said, not knowing how to contradict the assertion."

"But now," said Emily, "we could all give an answer to such objectors: even I could tell them that a set of poor ignorant fishermen, who knew neither how to write nor read, could not have invented such a wonderful and beautiful story."

"And even if they had," said Mrs. C., "they could never have persuaded the world to believe that it was true, when everybody around them could have stood up and told them it was false, and that no such transactions had happened in the country."

"Oh!" said Agnes, "if the apostles had only been telling falsehoods, Stephen and

Paul, whose histories show that they were killed merely for insisting on the truth of what they said, would soon have recalled their words, and have saved their lives by acknowledging the cheat."

"They would, indeed, my dear Agnes ; instead of which, you will find, when you have read each apostle's Life, that not one among the whole company ever varied or drew back in the statement of their story ; but that they all persevered in it without faltering, through poverty, suffering, agony, and torture, even to their death."

"That reminds me of some lines of Dryden, which you once made me get by heart, grandmamma," said Emily ; and being asked to repeat them, she readily gave the following quotation :—

"Whence, but from heaven, should men unskilled in arts,
In different ages born, in different parts,
Weave such agreeing truths ? or how, or why,
Should they conspire to cheat us with a lie ?
Unasked their pains, ungrateful their advice :
Starving their gains, and *martyrdom* their price.

"The lines are indeed very applicable," said Mrs. C., "and bring to my mind an anecdote which bears on the same point.

"There was once a great philosopher, called Celsus, who, thinking himself very wise, like you, Henry, objected that the apostles were a set of mean illiterate mechanics, sorry mariners and fishermen, who were not fit or proper persons to teach the doctrines of a sublime religion. But Origen, a wiser man than he, replied to him, 'If such persons, with uncontrolled success, prevailed over the whole learned world, if they obliged men to credit and obey their simple word, conquering by mere force of truth those who had the greatest abilities and the most inveterate prejudices against them, then it was a clear proof that they spoke and acted by divine inspiration. I confidently believe,' continued Origen, 'that the holy Jesus made choice of such preachers on purpose to make it clear to every understanding that there was no art or design in what they said, but that they preached from facts, and had the power and spirit of God going along with them in all they taught.'"

"I like Origen very much," said Henry. "He was a great deal wiser than Celsus, I think, and I am sure he spoke out boldly and courageously, just the way papa would have done, if he had been there. Will you now

grandmamma, let us hear what Andrew and Peter did when our Saviour desired them to follow him?"

"They listened to the call with humble and obedient hearts," said Mrs. C.; "and in the next chapter we shall hear how they acted."

CHAPTER XI.

LIFE AND MARTYRDOM OF ANDREW,
CONTINUED.

“ALTHOUGH the apostles could not, at the moment, understand what our Saviour meant by saying he would make them to become fishers of men, yet they did not hesitate to obey his call.”

“And what did he mean, grandmamma? for I cannot guess.”

“He meant that the apostles should have power to draw away the souls of men from the darkness of error into the light of truth, just as they had hitherto drawn fishes upon land from the depths of the sea. But whether the brothers comprehended the full meaning of the words, or whether they conceived from them, as some imagined, that they were now to be engaged in warfare against their enemies, they did not stop to parley on the subject, but immediately forsook their nets, left all, and followed their Master.

"From that time Andrew continued a constant attendant on our Saviour's person, and was soon afterward called to all the offices and honours of the apostolate. Like the other apostles, he received power to cast out unclean spirits, to heal all manner of sickness and disease among the people, and was appointed to go forth with the rest to preach the gospel to mankind.

"There is not, however, great mention made of him any more than of the other disciples during the lifetime of his Master, and it is not until after the Ascension that we know any thing of his particular history; nor are the circumstances with which we are made acquainted, until near the period of his death, so copious or interesting as those which we shall have to relate of his brother.

"It is generally affirmed by the ancients that the apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit to draw lots for which parts of the world they should separately take as the fields in which they were to labour. In this division Andrew had Scythia and its neighbouring countries allotted as his province. First, he travelled into Cappadocia, Galatia, and Bithynia, passing along the Euxine Sea until

he arrived at the innermost solitudes of Scythia, where he met with many Jews and converts. Returning, he afterward came to Nice, preaching and working miracles with great success."

"Ah, grandmamma," said Henry, "I wish he had been at Nice when you were there. He would have taught those nasty Douaniers better than to let them search your carriage and take away your Bible and prayer-book, for fear you should use them to make converts in the town."

"It was at Nice in Piedmont that this took place, Henry: the Nice now spoken of was in Bithynia. The religion taught by Andrew must, however, have been strangely perverted before such acts of bigotry could have been allowed in any part of the globe: but I trust the day is coming when the pure faith will rise again in Piedmont, and wherever else it has been perverted throughout the whole world.

"It would be needless to recount the numerous places which were visited by Andrew after his departure from Nice, or the difficulties, dangers, and discouragements he encountered in them all; but he still went on

doing his Master's work according to his will.

"At one place he met with a piece of unexpected good fortune, which made him very happy. Having reached the city of Sinope, situated on the Euxine Sea, and famous, as you, I am sure, remember, Emily, both for the birth and burial of the great king Mithridates, he was passing along the streets intent on the business of his calling, when he was met by his beloved brother Simon, whom he could not have confidently reckoned upon ever again beholding, and who was equally overjoyed with himself at the meeting.

"Here they remained for a considerable time, pursuing their great work together with constancy and success. On their departure the inhabitants testified their affectionate remembrance of the brothers by preserving and exhibiting to a late period the two chairs, made of white stone, on which they used to sit while teaching the people; but their brethren the Jews, who were the chief inhabitants of the town, became exasperated against the apostles, and having chased Peter from the place, plotted to burn the house where Andrew resided.

"Failing in this, they seized and treated him with such savage cruelty as is dreadful to relate or think of. They flung him on the ground, stamped upon him with their feet, dragged him along the earth from street to street, some beating him with heavy clubs, some pelting him with stones, and others, yet more savage, tearing the flesh from his bones with their teeth.

"Convinced that they had despatched him, they cast him out of the city to be devoured by dogs. Their astonishment was however great, to see him a short time after walking publicly about the town, fearless of further violence, and performing several miracles of healing among the people, which induced them to suppose that he had been himself miraculously restored to life: whether that was really the case or not has not been ascertained.* The belief, however, led the people to a better feeling towards him, and enabled him to make several converts among these his bitterest enemies, before he departed from their country."

"I would not have staid one instant among them," said Henry, "if I had been he."

* Stackhouse.

"Then, my boy, you would have lost a noble opportunity of proving that Christian principles endue the soul with more strength and courage, more brotherly love, and truer feelings of charitable forgiveness than any other principle on earth."

"His return among them," said Emily, "was indeed a strong proof of courage and forgiveness; but in going, he probably knew that such conduct would have the best chance of softening their hearts towards him, and making them listen to the truth. But who, except a Christian, would have voluntarily exposed himself to such treatment again?"

"And all," rejoined Agnes, "to do good to such wicked wretches. Even pagans will, I know, endanger their lives for their friends; but none except Christians would, I believe, run such risks for their enemies."

"That is something like what St. Paul said to the Romans," said Emily. "'*Scarcely* for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure, for a good man, some would even dare to die.'"

"But Christ," rejoined Mrs. C., "proved his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners and enemies, he died for us: and fol-

lowing his example, every good Christian would willingly hazard the sacrifice of his own life when by so doing he could save an immortal soul. Such was at least the effect of his blessed example on Andrew: notwithstanding all he had already endured, fearing neither death nor suffering in any shape in which it could present itself, he went from place to place, and country to country, among people the most barbarous and untractable, trying to teach men how little value should be set on this vain life, and endeavouring to win over their faith and gratitude for that atoning sacrifice which was to purchase for them a life of immortality.

“The places which he visited, as well as the dangers and fatigues he encountered during many following years, are much too numerous to mention: we shall only remark, that he had at last the satisfaction of being able to revisit Sinope, to encourage and confirm the Christians whom he had left there, and whom he still found firm in the faith he had taught them.

“Having more fully established their church, and appointed Philologus, formerly one of St. Paul’s disciples bishop of the city, he took

leave of all his friends there and departed for a town at some distance, where he founded another very flourishing church ; and meeting with Stachys, another of St. Paul's disciples, whom that apostle calls his beloved Stachys, he ordained him first bishop of the place. The name of the place was Byzantium."

"Byzantium, Emily ! I do not remember that name in my geography, but you remember every place ; do show it to me on the map, and tell me if it was remarkable, like Sinope, for the birth and burial of a great king, or for any thing else that you could tell me."

"Come here," said his sister, "and I will show it to you, standing on the western shore of the Bosphorus, in the most lovely situation possible. I wish we had a clear view of it, Henry ; for it is said by all travellers to be the most beautiful city in the whole world."

"Dear me, I wish we could see it !" said Henry ; "but now what else can you tell about it ?"

"It was remarkable for several great events, and has been rendered more famous by one in particular, than it could ever have been by the birth or burial of any king."

"What was that, Emily?"

"The birth of a great eagle."

"An eagle, Emily! O do tell me all about it," said he, knocking his feet together with even more than his usual eagerness. "Emily, why do you stop? Will you, grandmamma, tell it to me? I love to hear remarkable events, especially about great eagles, and great kings, and things of that kind."

"If you loved history as much as your sister does, Henry, you would yourself be able to tell others what you are now so anxious to be told. You would have read in the history of Rome, that the Emperor Constantine the Great had once made choice of a place on the eastern shore of the Hellespont, where he intended to build a superb town, which should rival all the cities of the East. He had marked the spot, and stretched out the lines which were to limit its dimensions, when an eagle, supposed to be one from Byzantium, happening to catch up, or probably getting entangled in the cords used for the measurement, rose with them into the air, and flying across the strait, dropped them on the opposite shore in the midst of her own city. The emperor, conceiving that this was an omen

directing him to make choice of that place, immediately resolved to fix his residence there. He found that nature had furnished it with all the conveniences and requisites for an imperial city. It was situated on an immense plain, which rose gently from the water's edge, commanded a view of the Hellespont, and of the finest harbour in the world, where twelve hundred ships could ride with perfect ease and safety. Besides this, it could hold under control the trade both of the Euxine and Mediterranean seas ; and, what was better still, it enjoyed all the advantages of a most delicious and salubrious climate.

“ Constantine, therefore, set about beautifying the place with all possible speed, adorning it with numberless superb edifices, churches, temples, and theatres ; and having rendered it equal to all that his own magnificent imagination could conceive, he called it New Rome, which name he afterward changed to Constantinople, in honour of himself. When all was complete, he dedicated his new metropolis, in the most solemn manner, to One of whom he once knew but very little.”

“ Who was that, grandmamma ?”

“To the God of the martyrs. Constantine had heard of Jesus Christ and his disciples ; the circumstances of whose holy lives and cruel martyrdom could not, in those early times, be contradicted. To this divine religion he became himself a convert, and claiming the Saviour as the object of his own worship, he dedicated his new town to the God of the martyrs, whose followers now peopled the entire East, outnumbering those of every other religion in those parts. By this we may judge, Henry, of the influence which these simple and ignorant fishermen had obtained, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, over the minds of men.

“Although the number of Christians at the era of this remarkable dedication was so immense, there had not elapsed more than two hundred and fifty years between that period and the time to which we must now hasten back, when Andrew consecrated to God the first Christian church in the same place.

“Having fully achieved that undertaking, we are told by the best and most ancient authorities that he was banished from the city by the government, and obliged to fly to Argyropolis, a place in the neighbourhood,

where the people gladly received him, and where he remained for two years, preaching the gospel with great comfort and success.

“ After this, he traversed Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Achaia, and Epirus, in all which places he propagated the religion of Christ, confirming the doctrines he taught with great signs and wonders.

“ At length he arrived at Patræ, a city of Achaia, where Ægeas, the proconsul of that province, a very wicked man, became his decided enemy. That person having come to Patræ, when making the rounds of his office, observed that multitudes had turned away from paganism to embrace the doctrines of Christianity. Enraged at this circumstance, he endeavoured by every art, both of favour and of cruelty, to bring the people back to his own idolatrous worship; but he found them steadfast and immoveable in the faith of Christ.

“ Anxious for his salvation in common with that of all mankind, our apostle addressed him, as he had done his other converts, mildly and calmly acquainting him with that religion through which he might attain everlasting life. But the proconsul derided him as an

impostor, a propagator of an odious superstition, whose Author, he reminded him, had been ignominiously put to death by the Jews upon a cross. To this opprobrious speech Ægeas added, that if he did not immediately renounce Christianity, and sacrifice to the gods, he would make him suffer on the same vile instrument of torture.

“ When the proconsul ceased speaking, Andrew mildly replied, that he did constantly sacrifice to the only true and holy Being who had a right to demand such offerings at his hands. He duly observed that solemn sacrificial rite which had been appointed by his Saviour on the night before his death: he sacrificed also to him every sinful and improper inclination of his heart; and he was now, still further, ready to offer up his life in vindication of his Master’s honour, and in proof that he was indeed the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind.

“ Ægeas listened while he spoke, but he heard him unmoved. No feeling was stirred within him, except that of anger; and he immediately ordered the apostle to be hurried off to prison.

“ The people, to whom Andrew was now

very dear, alarmed and enraged at his seizure, broke into open mutiny, and would have rescued him at every hazard ; but the apostle himself persuaded them to desist, and entreated them to imitate on this and every other occasion the mild and patient conduct of their meek and lowly Saviour.

“ On the following morning he was brought before the proconsul, who now tried a different plan, endeavouring calmly to reason with him, arguing that he ought not thus foolishly to throw his life away to no good end, when he might, by renouncing his creed, live with him and enjoy the pleasures of the world the remainder of his days.

“ ‘ That could be only for a few short years at best,’ replied the apostle ; ‘ but if you will renounce your idols, and heartily embrace the Christian faith, you shall live with me for ever and ever in the kingdom of our Father, enjoying such felicity as “ eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.” Why,’ added the apostle with affectionate energy, ‘ why will you not open your heart to receive this blessed religion, which I have preached with so much success among your countrymen,

and from which they have derived such consolation?"

"'The reason,' replied the cold-hearted Ægeas, 'why I have been hitherto so urgent with you to renounce the Christian faith, and to sacrifice to our gods, is, that those whom you have everywhere seduced might see their folly in having embraced your mode of worship, and so be brought back to that ancient religion which you have made them forsake; but since you refuse, you shall be crucified with tortures as dreadful as any that have ever been invented; and that without delay.'

"The apostle answered with undisturbed calmness, that suffering, if endured with patience, would only make him more precious in the eyes of his compassionate Redeemer; and that he would endeavour to bear whatever tortures might be heaped upon him with the constancy that became one who knew that the sufferings of this life could endure but for a short season, whereas they would 'work for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory' in that kingdom where they should be followed, through the tender mercies of his God, by joys that could never end.

"Ægeas, enraged by such unconquerable

fortitude, could restrain himself no longer, and commanded that he should immediately be scourged with unexampled severity. Seven lictors were appointed successively to lash the apostle's naked body, each being ordered to take up the scourge as others, from fatigue, were forced to lay it down. This punishment, it was hoped, would soon exhaust the patience of the sufferer ; but seeing that his invincible constancy only commanded the respect of the populace, the proconsul at last ordered him to be distended on a cross, made in the form of the letter X, to which he should be bound with cords, that so his death might be more lingering and agonizing. While led to execution, his manner evinced such perfect resignation and composure of mind, that the populace cried out with clamour at the injustice of his sentence, declaring that he was an innocent and holy man, against whom no possible crime had been alleged. Ægeas, however, and his satellites, forced them to repress their murmurs, and in spite of every opposition, hurried their victim forward to his doom.

"Having come within sight of the cross erected for his crucifixion, Andrew saluted it

with a kind address, and declared that he had long expected the happy hour which was now arrived.

“The cross, he said, had been consecrated by bearing the sacred body of his Redeemer, and he now came to it joyful and triumphant, being thought worthy to be received as a disciple and follower of Him who, despising the shame, had hung upon it for the salvation of the human race: that as it had been the instrument on which his Saviour had redeemed the world, he did not doubt that it would carry him in safety to his Master.

“While they fastened him to the cross, he exhorted his numerous surrounding converts to patience, constancy, and perseverance in that religion which he had proclaimed to them; and during the whole of two days while he remained stretched in lingering tortures on that dreadful instrument of death he continued, in the most gentle and affecting language, teaching, instructing, and exhorting those who stood around.

“Meantime, the most urgent importunities were used by the people to induce the pro consul to spare his life, and let him be taken down. But Andrew, who heard their expos

tulations, earnestly prayed to God that he might at this time be permitted to seal the truth of his religion with his blood ; and God showed that he heard and accepted his prayer, for the apostle immediately expired.

“ Both friends and foes stood silent and awe-struck, as his soul winged its flight to mansions of rest.

“ ‘ How our hearts burn within us at this scene.

Whence this brave bound o’er limits fixed to man
At that dark hour which gen’ral horror spreads.
Sweet peace, and heavenly joy, and humble hope
Divinely beam on his exalted soul !
His God sustains him in his final hour,—
His final hour brings glory to his God.’ ”

“ Oh how happy he must be now ! ” said Emily, her eyes glistening with tears of pity and admiration. “ How one does wonder at his patience and fortitude ! It seems almost incredible.”

“ It would indeed be quite incredible, my love, were we not assured that God supports his creatures in such trying hours, and breathes into their souls a spirit superior to all the sufferings of the flesh. The mock composure and boasted fortitude of those who know not God have never yet been known to stand be-

fore long-protracted bodily suffering. Such fortitude may last for a little hour, while pride and vanity can hold their sway, and while friends are near to applaud and flatter ; but it has never yet been found to endure a day of real unassisted trial."

"And yet, grandmamma," said Agnes, "we read of the poor Indians bearing the prolonged tortures inflicted on them by their enemies, with constancy as wonderful as that displayed by any Christian martyr."

"No, my love, not half so wonderful ; for the poor Indians had been trained from their earliest infancy to such feats of patient endurance, and taught to practise them as almost the only requisite virtue : and think you, my beloved Agnes, that God does not behold the struggles and support the weakness of the suffering Indian ? Or think you that our heavenly Father only compassionates and assists the Christian ?

"We are indeed his chosen servants, but still he is kind and merciful to all. The savage, even though he bows down to idols made of wood and stone, is prompted by instincts which God has given him to seek some object of worship on which he may rely for safety

and protection. Though ignorant of all other knowledge, he feels that constancy and firmness of soul must be pleasing to the Being he desires to serve. Though for the present, through the inscrutable decrees of Divine Wisdom, he may be left in darkness, yet his unseen and unknown Saviour beholds his blindness, and feels for his ignorant and sinful nature a measure of the same tender compassion which he feels for us. To him is therefore given according to his necessities a full proportion of that superhuman strength which, in whomsoever it appears, must still be recognised as the work of the Almighty."

"It is very delightful," said Mary, "to think that God feels for the poor Indians just the same compassion, and love, and tenderness which he feels for us."

"That, my beloved child, is more than I have said. Nor have we authority for supposing that he feels just the same for them as for us. The subject has indeed been left in darkness, because it is one beyond our finite comprehension ; but we know that in a better world all that seems dark and difficult here will be made plain. In the mean time, we may be assured that God feels for all in measure as

he ought, and gives to each the aid that is humbly sought.

" Of the truth of this remark we shall have a strong example in the history which is to follow : but before it be presented to the public, we must see whether or not the generality of our young readers, or rather their parents and friends, will consider those now completed worthy of their approbation."

As she finished speaking, Mrs. C. had again the satisfaction of perceiving from the countenances of her youthful auditors that they had taken a lively interest in the conversation and reading of the evening.

Hopes and wishes were then anxiously expressed for the success of this LIBRARY, and the clock warning them that it was time, the party adjourned, according to their custom, to the room in which they always met for family service.

END OF VOL. I.

